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MYTHOLOGICAL FICTIONS

OF THE

GREEKS AND ROMANS.

BY

CHARLES PHILIP MORITZ.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FIFTH EDITION IN GERMAN, WITH IMPROVEMENTS,

BY C. F. W. J.

NEW-YORK:

G. & C. & H. CARVILL, 108 BROADWAY.

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THE work now offered to the public was translated by Mr. CHARLES FREDERICK WILLIAM JAEGER, a native of Germany, and a graduate of the University of Giessen. The editor was introduced to him by the Rev. Mr. Schaeffer, a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran church in this city, and regrets that his return to Germany has prevented him from cultivating an acquaintance with a scholar so extensive and accurate in his acquirements, and so unassuming in his character. Mr. Jaeger spent about three years in this country, and had acquired a sufficient knowledge of the English language to enable him to write and speak it with considerable facility. His manuscript became known to the editor; and some circumstances, which it is unnecessary to make public, led him to feel no small interest in the work. It was not to be expected that, in so short a time as three years, a foreigner could acquire so thorough and accurate a knowledge of English, as to write it with perfect purity, and without any admixture of the idioms of his vernacular tongue. That the sentiments of the German author should have been transferred into this language in the style and manner of Mr. Jaeger's manuscript, where the peculiarities of the original were very often exhibited with striking correctness in the choice of appropriate words and phrases, was to the editor equally surprising and agreeable. With the view, however, of enhancing the value of the work, he has endeavoured to make

it as accurate as a careful revision would enable him to do, and he hopes that the German idiom has not often escaped his notice and correction. He has compared it with the work of Moritz, the beauties of which are transfused into the present production, with occasional alterations and additions, which he thinks entitle it to be announced as an "improvement" of the original.

The immediate avocation and daily duties of the editor do not allow him to devote much time and study to Greek and Latin classics. Still he is well aware of the importance of making them the ground-work of a thorough education, and cannot but indulge the hope, that this little work of Moritz may be of use in advancing among us a department of literature, which it must be confessed is not estimated as its importance merits. The author seems to have entered into the spirit which pervades remote antiquity, and to have written his work under the excitement of the feelings which characterize the age of imagination; so much so indeed, that at times the reader might almost suppose that it is the well attested truth of history which is presented to his view and not the fictions of mythological fable.

S. H. T.

New-York, *January*, 1830.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE work from which the present translation is made, ranks among the favourite school-books used in the Gymnasia of Germany. It contains, in a small compass, all the important matter connected with the subject which the title-page announces. The arrangement is judicious, simple, and alike easily comprehended and retained in the memory. Though it treats of a very delicate subject, and one which is particularly difficult to be properly explained to young persons, the author has surmounted its difficulties, and stands distinguished among the writers on Mythology, by the chasteness of his language. His pure and elevated feeling has led him to avoid the dangerous tendency, which so frequently prevails in our own enlightened age, and even with regard to religious subjects, where it might least be expected, to despise and ridicule what we cannot approve. In compiling his work, he did not forget that it was his duty to behold himself, and to make his readers behold, former times and past generations, as far as possible, in their own light, and not in that of the nineteenth century; and thus he has succeeded in discovering and pointing out some beautiful features of his subject.

These may be considered as the principal reasons why this work has met with so favourable a reception in Germany. that in the space of a few years the fifth edition has been called for.

Although the book is principally intended for the use of young persons, the various hints here and there thrown out by the author, relating to the connexion between fiction and reality, may render it attractive also to the more advanced scholar. In fact, the arrangement of the whole is adapted to every class of readers. In the preface to the first edition, the author himself thus concisely states the design of his work: "I have at-

tempted to represent the Mythological Fictions of the Ancients in the sense in which they are applied by the principal poets and artists—*as a language of Fancy;* and an attentive consideration of their works has been my clew through the labyrinth of these Fictions." In that to the fifth edition, the editor expresses himself as follows: "Instead of a complete heathen theology, acquaintance with which is neither easily attained, nor pursued with pleasure, and in regard to which it is even not to be wished that it should be more extensively diffused, we here find an ingenious and lively representation of such poetic fictions as most frequently occur. And even the truly learned will often be surprised at the happy conceptions of Moritz, who, not aware of the difficulty of proving many of his positions, frequently touches with great felicity the vital point of an ancient fiction; and the fable, related by him, acquires an evident and intelligible consistency."

This fifth edition, as it appears from the foregoing paragraph, was not published under the inspection of the author. Moritz is no more; but his name lives in the grateful remembrance of thousands, who were led by him, in an easy and agreeable manner, into a field of literature, attractive in itself, and necessary to be traversed, in order to understand and enjoy the writers of antiquity.

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MYTHOLOGICAL FICTIONS

OF THE

GREEKS AND ROMANS.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Point of view in which Mythology ought to be considered.

Mythological fictions are to be considered as a language of imagination, and, viewed in this light, they are taken out of the connexion of realities, and constitute, as it were, a world of themselves.

Imagination, meeting with no resistance, reigns arbitrarily in her own dominion. It is her nature to create and to form; for which purpose she chooses a wide scope, at the same time carefully avoiding all abstract and metaphysical ideas that might interrupt or confound her fictitious creations. She shuns, above all, the idea of a metaphysical infinity and boundlessness, because in it her delicate creations would instantly lose themselves. She boldly discards the idea of an existence without beginning; with her all is rise, conception, and birth, up to the remotest history of the gods. None of the higher beings that imagination exhibits, is from eternity; none of unlimited power. She also sets aside the idea of omnipresence, for it would restrain life and motion in her world of deities.

She endeavours, on the contrary, as much as possible, to connect her creations with time and place; she loves to soar and rest over the real world: lest, however, the

too nigh proximity and too great lustre of reality should be prejudicial to her dusky light, she is most gratified in adhering to the dark history of yore, where time and place themselves are often wavering and uncertain, and where she may therefore range with the more freedom.

But as, at the same time, in the mythological fictions which antiquity has delivered to us, a faint trace of its lost history is concealed, they become more venerable, being not a mere dream, nor an empty play of wit, but receiving, through their intimate connexion with the most ancient events, a weight, which prevents them from dissolving into mere allegory. To endeavour to transform the Mythology of the ancients, by various forced interpretations, into empty allegories, would be no less foolish, than to attempt to metamorphose it altogether into pure, true history. The hand that should dare to draw aside the veil which covers these fictions, would, at the same time, injure the nice texture of fancy, and meet only with contradictions and absurdities instead of the expected discoveries. That these tender blossoms of poesy may not be blighted, it is necessary to take them at first *just as they are*, without any regard to what they *may signify*, in order to behold, as much as possible at one single view, the whole of them, and, by degrees, to trace the remoter relations between the several fragments which time has left to us. Thus, if we were taught, for instance, that Jupiter signifies the higher air, this explanation would, by no means, furnish us with a just idea of Jupiter, in which every thing should be comprised that fancy has included in it, and whereby this idea is complete in itself without the necessity of having recourse to any thing external. The idea of Jupiter, in the dominion of fancy, signifies, first, himself, as the name of Cæsar in the chain of realities, means, first, Cæsar himself; and a person, who, by beholding the masterwork of Phidias, would first have thought of the higher air, must have disowned all feeling for every thing beauti-

ful and sublime, and considered the most eminent work of art as a hieroglyphic or dead letter, the whole value of which consists in signifying something external, not belonging to itself.

A true work of art, a beautiful product of imagination, is something finished and complete in itself; it exists for, and carries its value in itself, as well as in the well arranged proportion of its parts; while, on the other hand, mere hieroglyphics or letters may be ever so ill-shaped, provided they point out the thoughts of the writer. The man who, after the perusal of Homer, should ask, what the Iliad means, and what the Odyssey, must certainly have been little touched by their sublime poetical beauties.

Again: all that a beautiful work of fancy signifies, lies in itself; it reflects, in its greater or smaller compass, the relations of things, the life and fate of man, and teaches wisdom, according to Horace, better than Crantor and Chrysippus. But all these considerations are secondary to the poetical beauties, and not the chief aim of poesy. Instruction also does not constitute her principal task; yet she teaches the better for this very reason, because even instruction subjects itself to what is beautiful in poetry, and, by this very means, acquires new grace and additional charms. In mythological fictions, however, instruction is indeed so far subordinate, that if we should seek for it in them, the whole series of these fables would appear frivolous. For, in these poetical representations of higher beings, man is of so little moment, that he in general, and his moral wants in particular, are totally disregarded. He often appears in them as nothing but the sport of those superior powers, who, being above all responsibility, raise and sink him at their pleasure, less anxious to punish the offences between man and man, than to revenge, in the most direful manner, every appearance of encroachment upon the privileges of the gods.

These superior personages are by no means moral

beings. With them, power is always the principal consideration to which all others are subjected. The everlasting strength of youth which they possess, displays itself in its whole luxurious fulness: for, as every one of these beings represents in itself, in a certain respect, the whole of nature with all its luxuriant growth and swelling abundance, it is in such a representation above all morality; because the whole of nature cannot be said to be extravagant, nor can the lion be reproached on account of his fierceness, nor the eagle for his rapacity, nor the snake for its noxiousness.

But as fancy, avoiding general ideas, endeavours to individuate her creations as much as possible, she transfers the idea of a superior, provident power, to different beings, whom she represents as individuals, ascribing to them genealogies, birth, name, and human shape. She causes them to act also, as much as she possibly can, in the regions of reality. Her gods marry the daughters of men, and from this union spring those *heroes* who, by bold deeds, ripen into immortality.

Here then it is where the region of imagination borders the nearest to that of reality, and where it is of importance to consider the language of fancy, or mythological fiction, merely as such, and to guard against all premature historical interpretation: for this intermingling of truth with fable in early history, forms on our horizon the first dawn. If a bright day shall here arise, it is necessary to separate the mythological fables as much as possible from one another, in order to discover the thread of their coherence. To collect, in this manner, the oldest national tales which are handed down to us, is the task of a general mythology, to which the present work, comprising that of the Greeks and Romans, may be considered as a small contribution.

Let a poet who, in the most faithful strains, has sung the praise of fancy, lead us into her domain.

MY GODDESS.

"To which of the immortals belongs the highest praise? I shall not contend the point with any one, but give mine to Fancy, the never resting, ever changing, whimsical daughter of Jupiter, his darling.

For to her he has granted all freaks, which he shares with none but herself, and he delights in the little fool.

May she, crowned with roses and bearing the stem of a lily, enter the flowery valleys, to rule over the butterflies, and suck with bees' lips the light nutritious dew from the blossoms;

Or, with dishevelled hair and gloomy aspect, rush through the yielding wind, round rocky walls, appearing in a thousand different colours, ever changing like morning and eve, as moon-glances appear to mortal eyes.

Let us all praise the old venerable father, who has granted to mortal men so fair a companion, endowed with never fading charms.

For to us alone he has united her with heavenly band, bidding her never to forsake us, to abide with us in joy and sorrow, as becomes a faithful companion.

All the other poor races of prolific earth, the mother of life, wander and feed in the blind enjoyment, as well as the dull pain of momentary, limited life, bent under the yoke of necessity.

But upon us—O rejoice! he has bestowed his most active daughter, his own darling. Treat her with affection, like a beloved one, let her enjoy the honour of a wife.

And let the old grave mother-in-law, Wisdom, by no means distress the tender little soul!

I know her sister also, the elder and more serious of the two, my gentle friend! O that she may never forsake me, while the light of life continues, she the noble encourager, comforter—Hope!"

GOETHE.

GENERATION OF THE GODS.

Wheresoever the eye of fancy cannot penetrate, there is chaos, night, and darkness; and yet the sublime imagination of the Greeks carried even into this night a faint glimmer, which gave charms to its very terrors.

In the beginning, there is nothing but *Chaos* and sable-vested *Night*, the ancestors of *Nature;* from them the vast *Earth*, (Gea, Terra,) afterward takes her rise, and the gloomy *Erebus* his, and *Cupid* also, the fairest of immortal gods. Thus, in the very first outset of these fictitious compositions, the opposite extremes of things are brought together; beauty and loveliness being united with the terrors of night and darkness. Form and beauty must arise out of shapelessness and deformity; light must spring from darkness. *Night*, (Nox.) marries *Erebus*, the old seat of gloom, and the offspring of their union are *Aether* and *Day*.

Yet *Night*, concealing in herself all the forms, which the light of day expands before our eyes, presents to us a numerous progeny. Her seat is the deep of the *Earth;* there is utter darkness, and there the source of all things high, heavenly, and lucid. *Earth* produces out of herself *Uranos*, or the *Sky*, that bends over her, and thus the dark solid matter, surrounded by light and transparency, is what comprises the seed of all things, and from whose womb all creatures spring forth.

Earth, after having further produced out of herself the *Mountains*, and *Pontus*, or the *Sea*, marries *Uranos*, who overclouds her, and she gives him strong sons and daughters, who become formidable to their parent himself. They are:

The hundred-armed Giants, *Cottus*, *Gyges* or *Gyes*, and *Briareus;*

The monstrous Cyclops, *Brontes*, *Steropes*, and *Arges;*

The ambitious Titans of great strength, *Coeus*, *Crius*, *Hyperion*, and *Japetus*; *Oceanus*;

The mighty Titanides, *Thia*, *Rhea*, *Themis*, *Mnemosyne*, *Phoebe*, *Tethys*; and finally *Saturnus* or *Chronos*, the youngest of the Titans.

These children of *Sky* and *Earth*, (Uranos and Gea; Coelus and Terra,) however, live not to behold the light of day, but are, as soon as they are born, shut up again in *Tartarus* by their father, who dreads their innate strength. Thus *Chaos* still maintains her rights. All formations are yet unsettled, and wavering between sedition and oppression. *Earth* groans in her innermost recesses on account of her children's fate, and meditates vengeance. Forging the first sickle, she gives it as an instrument of revenge to *Saturn*, her youngest son.

Those wild generations must cease. Uranos, who keeps his own children prisoners in nocturnal darkness, must be deprived of his authority. His youngest son, Saturn, instigated by his mother, overreaches him when embracing Earth, and maims him with the sickle received by his mother. Out of the drops of blood which Earth catches up in her lap, arise, in the course of time, the avenging *Furies*, the dreadful *Giants*, who hurl defiance toward the vault of heaven, and the Nymphs *Meliae*, who dwell upon the mountains. The prolific power taken from Uranos, renders the Sea fertile, from whose foam *Aphrodite*, the goddess of Love and Beauty, arises. Thus, out of strife and sedition among the primeval beings, beauty develops and forms itself.

The children of Uranos and Gea, intermarry and propagate the race of the Titans. *Coeus* (Choios, he that begets,) together with Phoebe, (the shining,) becomes the father of *Latona* and *Asteria*, the former of whom is afterwards the spouse of Jupiter, and the latter the mother of Hecate. *Hyperion*, (the wanderer on

high,) produces with *Thia*, (the godlike,) *Aurora*, *Helios* and *Luna*; *Oceanus* with *Tethys*, (the nourisher,) the *Streams* and *Fountains*. *Japetus* marries *Clymene*, Oceanus' daughter, and is the parent of the Titans *Atlas*, *Menoetius*, *Prometheus*, and *Epimetheus*. *Crius*, (the ruler,) and *Eurybia*, (the strong,) a daughter of Pontus, give birth to the Titans *Astraeus*, *Pallas*, and *Perses*.

Saturn marries *Rhea*, and with him a new series of generations of gods commences, by whom the former in future times are to be deprived of their power. The lasting forms now gain the superiority, but still not without a long continued struggle against all-destroying Time, and all-devouring Chaos. Saturn himself is a symbol of this all-destroying Time. He who has maimed his father, swallows his own children as soon as they are born; for his mother Earth had predicted to him, that one of his sons would deprive him of his authority. Thus the crime, which he had committed against his father, was revenged. For, as Uranos formerly dreaded, so Saturn now dreads seditious power, and while he reigned over his brothers, the Titans, he, in the same manner as his father has done, keeps the hundred-armed Giants and Cyclops imprisoned in Tartarus.

He fears ruin from his own children. The newborn creatures still rise against the source of creation, that threatens to swallow them up again. Even as Earth formerly groaned on account of her children's confinement, so Rhea now laments the cruelty of her husband, the all-destroying power, that spares not its own creations. When, therefore, the time came in which she was to become the mother of *Jupiter*, the future ruler of gods and men, she implored Earth and the starry Heaven for the preservation of the yet unborn child. The ancient, primitive deities are deprived of government, and no influence is left them, but that of prophecies and counsel. The supplicated parents

advise their daughter to hide Jupiter, as soon as he should be born, in a fertile part of the isle of *Crete*. Wild, roving fancy, now fixing itself upon a certain spot of the earth, finds on the island, where this divine child shall be brought up, the first resting place.

At the advice of her mother, Earth, Rhea presents to Saturn, instead of her new-born child, a stone wrapped up in swaddling-clothes, and the stratagem succeeds. By means of this significant stone, so often mentioned by the ancients, bounds are set to destruction; the destroying power had taken, for the first time, with its pernicious grasp, death instead of life; and thus the latter gained time to rise secretly, as it were, to light, in order to form and unfold itself. But it is not yet secure against the persecutions springing from the very source, whence it derives its origin. The tutors of the divine child on the island of Crete, the *Curetes*, whose nature as well as origin is enveloped in mysterious darkness, make a continual noise with their shields and spears, lest Saturn should hear the voice of the crying infant.

Jupiter's education on the Island of Crete forms one of the most attractive pictures of imagination The goat *Amalthea*, which was afterwards placed among the stars, and whose horn became the symbol of plenty, suckles him with her milk. Doves bring him nourishment, golden coloured bees convey him honey, and the Nymphs of the woods are his nurses. The bodily as well as intellectual powers of this future king of gods and men, rapidly develop themselves. The old realm of Saturn approaches its end. In addition to Jupiter, five more of his children are saved from destruction: *Vesta*, *Ceres*, *Neptune*, *Juno*, and *Pluto*. United with them, Jupiter, after having delivered the Cyclops out of their prison, and received from them the thunderbolts, declares war against Saturn and the Titans who assist him. And now the modern gods, the descendants of Saturn and Rhea, separate themselves from the ancient deities or Titans, the children of Uranos and Gea.

WAR OF THE GODS.

The Titans are the seditious power in the created world, that rises against every authority; they are the immediate children of Heaven and Earth, whose wide-grasping force knows no limits, and endures no restraint.

Jupiter, however, had already prepared for himself the way to absolute power, by delivering from their confinement the hundred-armed giants Cottus, Gyges, and Briareus, and the Cyclops, from whom he received the thunderbolts.

The modern gods, with Jupiter at their head, assemble on Mount Olympus; the Titans on the opposite Mount Othrys; and the war of the gods begins. It had lasted ten years, and victory had not yet decided for either party, when Jupiter called to his assistance the hundred-armed giants, who owed to him their deliverance from confinement. These, complying with his request, joined him in the battle, and with their hundred arms threw immense rocks against the Titans, who in close phalanx stood opposed to them.

When the gods made the first assault upon each other, the sea rose, the earth groaned, the heavens sighed, and high Olympus was shaken from the top to its deepest root. The rapid lightnings were shot thick from Jupiter's mighty fist; the thunders rolled, the woods blazed, the sea boiled up, and the Titans were enveloped in mist and hot steam. Cottus, Gyges, and Briareus, stood foremost in the battle, hurling with every throw three hundred rocks down upon the heads of the Titanian brood. Then victory turned to the side of the Thunderer. Jove, with linked thunderbolts, hurled his foes down into the gulf of Tartarus.

The three victorious sons of Saturn now divided the ancient realm of the Titans among themselves. Jupiter reserved for his part the government of the heavens; the dominion of the seas he bestowed upon Neptune; and assigned the infernal regions to Pluto. The watch

of the entrance to the terrible prison, where the Titans were shut up, was committed to the hundred-armed Giants.

Though Jupiter's thunderbolts now kept the gods in awe and submission, his government was not yet firmly established. Earth groaned again at the ignominious treatment of her children, who were confined in the depths of Tartarus. Impregnated with the drops of blood which, on occasion of the maiming of Uranos, she had taken in her lap, she brought forth in the Phlegræan fields, the heaven-assailing giants with threatening foreheads and dragon-feet, who attempted to revenge the injury done to their brothers. They, accordingly, waged a new war on the Thunderer, and, although precipitated to the ground, they were not vanquished, for they received new strength, whenever they touched their mother Earth. *Porphyrion* and *Alcyoneus*, *Cromedon* and *Enceladus*, *Rhoetus*, and the valiant *Mimas*, raised their proud heads higher than all, and stood foremost against the Thunderer's aim; with youthful strength they flung massy oaks and huge rocks towards the heavens, disregarding the fiery shafts of Jupiter.

This fight, between Jupiter and the giants, where power is in sedition against power, is one of the sublimest subjects which plastic art can make use of; and antiquity did not fail to profit by it. One of the finest antique works that has come down to us, represents the mighty sons of Earth raising up their threatening heads from under the thunder-chariot of victorious Jove.

From the circumstance that, in the mythological fictions, the giants are brought in opposition to the gods, it may be inferred that the ancients did not ascribe to their gods immense magnitude. Intellectual power had always with them the preference over corporeal bulk; and the monstrous beings that fancy created, rose into existence, only in order to be vanquished by the divine

power of intellect, and to sink down under their own shapelessness. The noble propriety, which avoids the monstrous, and assigns due limits to all the subjects represented, is the chief feature in the fine arts of the ancients; and not without reason does their imagination, even in the oldest fictions, always incline to the representation, that shapelessness and enormity in form and limits must necessarily be first conquered and destroyed, before things can take their proper course.

The whole fiction of the war between the gods seems to rest on that idea. Uranos, or the widely expanded vault of heaven, was not to be comprehended in a single image; what fancy had conceived was still too shapeless and unlimited; to Uranos, therefore, his own productions, his children, must become dangerous. They must rise against him, and his realm disappear in night and darkness. Even the name of the Titans indicates the want of bounds and limits in their nature, whereby the pictures which imagination forms of them, become fluctuating and uncertain. Imagination shuns this boundlessness; the modern deities vanquish; the Titans cease to reign, and their forms retreat, as it were, into mist, through which they are but dimly seen.

In the place of the Titan Helios, god of the Sun, Apollo now stands in eternal youth, with bow and arrows. The image of Helios, however, still shines through, uncertain and wavering, so that imagination, in poetical works, often confounds them. In the place of old Oceanus, Neptune now appears with the trident, reigning over the floods of the sea.

The ancient deities, nevertheless, continue to be regarded with veneration; for they were not brought in opposition to the modern gods, like pernicious beings to good and beneficent ones, and as such deserving of hatred; but power rose against power, power was conquered by power, and the vanquished continued great even in his fall. For, though the realm of the Titans, and the government of Saturn, who swallowed up his

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P. 22.

own children, imply the idea of chaos, of want of bounds and forms; yet, at the same time, the idea of liberty and equality is connected with it, which must cease under the monarchical government of him who is armed with thunder and lightning.

Therefore, too, the *golden age* was transposed under the reign of Saturn, who, after having been deprived of his destructive power in the war of the gods, escaped the fate of the other Titans, and

Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields.

There, in the plains of Latium, surrounded by high mountains, he hid himself, and transferred thither the golden age, that happy period, when mankind lived in a state of perfect equality, and all things were in common. He is said to have arrived in a ship at the Tiber, in the dominions of Janus, and in union with him, to have reigned over men with wisdom and benignity.

This fiction is extremely beautiful and attractive, because of the unexpected transition from war and destruction to peace and the quiet exercise of justice and benevolence. While Jupiter, still in danger of being deprived again of his usurped authority, is hurling his thunderbolts against his foes; Saturn, far from the scene of violence, has arrived in the quiet fields of Latium, where, under his reign, those happy times pass away, which afterwards are celebrated and lamented in the songs of men as a good that is gone, and sought for in vain.

Saturn is sometimes represented upon ancient gems with a scythe in his hand, leaning on the prow of a ship, on the side of which rises part of an edifice and a wall. This is probably an allusion to Saturn's having built, near the Tiber, on the hills, where Rome was afterwards founded, the old city of Saturnia.

In this manner, Saturn sometimes appears as a symbol of all-destroying time, and sometimes as a king who once reigned in Latium. What is related of him,

is neither mere allegory nor true history, but both are mixed and blended together according to the laws of fancy. The same may be said with respect to the stories of the other deities, which we are to consider altogether as poetical pictures, easily injured by extending our scrutiny too far. For as the whole religion of the ancients was a religion of the imagination, and not of reason or higher authority, their Mythology is a beautiful dream, which certainly has much signification and connexion in it; giving also, from time to time, some sublime views, in which, however, the accuracy and certainty of the ideas of a waking state ought not to be expected.

Although Jupiter had banished the Titans into Tartarus, and, at length, subdued the giants also, having rolled upon them some islands of the sea, under which their impotent rage spends itself in those fiery eruptions, called volcanoes, which desolate the surrounding country; yet his authority was not without opposition. Earth, again growing angry at the imprisonment of her children, brought forth *Typhon* or *Typhoeus*, her youngest son, whose father was Tartarus himself. This Typhon is the most hideous monster that ever rose out of uncreated night. The upper part of his body is covered with impenetrable feathers, and the lower part defended by horrible serpents that coil themselves round his huge limbs; his hundred dragon-heads are continually darting their black tongues, and rolling their fiery eyes; devouring flames issue from his mouths; sometimes he utters articulate sounds, then again he howls and roars with a hundred different voices of forest beasts, so that the mountains resound with the horrid noise.

And now the new divinities had been undone, had not Jupiter instantly seized his lightnings, and hurled them upon the monster without intermission, till Earth and Heaven stand in flames, and the Universe is shaken, so that Pluto, the King of the shades, and the Titans in Tartarus, begin to tremble. Of all the

triumphs gained by Jupiter over his adversaries, the victory over this monster was the most difficult, and threatened himself with destruction. Typhoeus, however, was at last overcome, and secured under Mount Etna.

Thus has Jupiter subdued his most dangerous foe, and

> "He now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
> Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heaven."*

But after he had rid himself of his external adversaries, new dangers arose to him from his own resolutions. He married *Metis*, (Prudence,) daughter of Oceanus, and an oracle predicted that he would have a son by her, who should be endowed with his mother's prudence and his father's strength, and rule over all the gods. To prevent this, Jupiter with flattering allurements, drew Metis over into his own person, and he himself now brought forth Minerva, who, as a full grown virgin, in complete panoply, sprang out of his head. A similar danger threatened him, when he had a desire of marrying Thetis, who, according to another oracle, was to bring forth a son, *who should be more powerful than his father.*

In this manner the mightiest being, as it is represented in these fictions, always dreads a still mightier one. With the idea of an entirely unlimited power every poetical fiction ceases, fancy having no farther scope.

In latter times also, two sons of Neptune and Iphimedia, daughter of Aloeus, from whom they are called *Aloïdes*, became dangerous to Jupiter. *Otus* and *Ephialtes*, these are their names, flourishing in youth and beauty, and of gigantic bodies, threatened the immortal gods, piling mountains on top of mountains, over Olympus Ossa, and over Ossa Pelion, in order thus to scale the heavens. This design would have been accomplished by them, if they had arrived

* Paradise Lost, Book I. 123, s.

at the age of manhood. Apollo killed them with his arrows, before the soft down had covered their cheeks.

Thus, even mortals ventured to rise against the gods, who were therefore jealous of every higher development of human powers, and severely punished every encroachment upon their own usurped rights. They even envied men the possession of fire. For these were obliged to endure the hatred which the gods bore against the Titans, because they had been called into existence by one of their descendants, by Prometheus.

CREATION OF MAN.

The origin of men is in these fictions so subordinate, that they are represented as not even owing their existence to the reigning gods, but to a descendant of the Titans.

Prometheus, who formed the first men out of clay, was a son of Japetus. He had three brothers, Atlas, Menoetius, and Epimetheus, who were all, like himself, hated by the gods. Their father, Japetus, was at the same time with the other Titans thrown into Tartarus; his powerful son Menoetius, on account of his dangerous strength and haughty pride, was killed by Jupiter's lightning; upon the shoulders of Atlas, Jupiter laid the burden of the whole weight of the skies; Prometheus himself was, by his direction, fastened to a rock, where a vulture perpetually gnawed on his entrails; and Epimetheus was destined to bring wo and misery upon men.

Thus odious to the gods was the family of Japetus from which man took his origin, on whom all the innumerable sufferings were afterward heaped together, by which he had to atone for the guilt of his grudged existence.

The formation of men was accomplished in the following manner. Prometheus took a piece of earth, a portion of clay still impregnated with divine particles, moistened it with water, and formed man after the image of the gods, so that he alone raises his look to heaven, while all other creatures bend their eyes to the ground.

This representation shows that fancy could not ascribe even to her gods a superior form to that of man, because there is indeed in universal nature, (and nature is fancy's great magazine,) no being deserving of this preference. For the beams of the sun shine, but the eye of man sees; the thunder rolls, and the wave of the sea roars, but the tongue of man utters distinct and intelligible sounds; the moon and stars glitter in bright beauty, but the human countenance is indicative of a superior light.

Prometheus is represented, upon ancient works of art, as an artist engaged in his professional employment, with a vase standing at his feet, and before him a human *bust*, on which he seems to bestow the most intense consideration, in order to bring it to perfection.

When Prometheus had succeeded in representing the divine form, he burned with desire to bring his work to perfection. He rose up therefore to the chariot of Phœbus, in order to kindle that torch, from the fire of which he blew ethereal flames into the bosoms of his creatures, thus giving them warmth and life.

He is, therefore, often represented also sitting with a torch in his hand, over which a butterfly is hovering, to denote the animating breath, by which the dead mass is enlivened.

Prometheus having himself become a creator of divine formations, Jupiter grew angry at him, and contemplated the destruction of mankind. The father of the race, therefore, having on some occasion killed an ox, and, in order to try Jupiter, wrapped up the meat in one hide, and the bones in another, that he might choose

between the two parcels, Jupiter designedly chose the worse part. Thus he obtained a plausible ground of anger against Prometheus, and of persecuting his creations. He immediately deprived them of fire.

For, at that time, Jupiter durst not give vent to his hatred against Prometheus himself. His object was first to destroy his work; but even in this he did not succeed. The noble son of the earth, not being able to bear the misery of men, ascended, the second time, to the chariot of the sun, and fetched again the ethereal spark, hiding it in the stem of a reed. But when from afar Jupiter descried the light of fire upon earth, he formed the design of punishing men through their own folly; while Prometheus continued to teach them every useful art, for which the employment of fire was necessary, and, which was the greatest of his benefits, deprived them of the view into futurity, lest they should anticipate unavoidable evils. Thus, notwithstanding the efforts of Jupiter, the benefactor of man went on to bring to perfection, the creation and formation of mankind; although well aware, that he himself must afterward atone for it in a horrible manner.

This unequal and distant relation between men and the reigning gods, often afforded, in later times, a subject for tragical poems, the genius of which breathes in the following lines, in which a modern poet introduces Prometheus speaking in the name of men, of whose misery he is deeply sensible.

PROMETHEUS.

"Cover thy sky, O Zeus, with dusky clouds, and, like playing boys, who thistles poll, try thy power on oaks and mountain-summits.

Thou must, in spite of thee, suffer my Earth to stand; my cottage, too, not built by thee, and my hearth, the glow of which thou enviest me.

I know no poorer creatures beneath the sun, than

you gods! You miserably support your majesty by means of small offerings, and the breath of prayers; and would starve, if children and beggars were not hopeful fools.

When I was a child, not knowing what to do, I turned my strayed eye up to the sun, as if an ear for my complaint were there to be found, and a heart, like mine, to pity the distressed.

Who assisted me against the tyranny of the Titans? Who saved me from death, from slavery? Hast thou not performed it all, heart, glowing with sacred flames! And didst thou not, young and good, deceived, utter warm thanks for preservation to him, who sleeps above the skies!

I honour thee?—For what? Hast thou ever lessened the pains of the heavy laden? Hast thou ever wiped the tears of affliction? Hath not almighty time wrought and formed me a man, and eternal fate, my masters and thine?

Dost thou haply ween, that I should hate life, and flee into deserts, because not every flowery dream doth ripen? Here sit I, forming men after my image, a race to resemble me, to suffer and to weep, to enjoy and to rejoice; and, like me, not to care for thee!"

GOETHE.

Jupiter, angry on account of the theft of fire, had now formed, by divine hands, a female of exquisite beauty and seductive charms, called *Pandora*, whom he sent to Prometheus with a box, destined as a present for him. In this box the whole train of evils that threaten mankind, was enclosed. But Prometheus, aware of the fraud, did not accept the dangerous gift. Jupiter, still more enraged by the failure of his cunning attempt, and burning with the desire of revenging himself upon Prometheus, now ordered him to be fastened to a rock, where a vulture all the day long fed on his liver, which,

growing again during the night, continued to be the means of his torments.

Meanwhile, however, the misfortune appointed to men, came upon them in spite of the prudence of Prometheus. The inconsiderate Epimetheus, although warned by his brother, suffered himself to be smitten with the charms of Pandora, who, after he had married her, opened the pernicious box, out of which all imaginable miseries spread themselves over the whole earth, and upon all mankind. Pandora, perceiving the dangerous contents of the box, immediately closed it again, but alas! it was too late. All the evils had escaped, and nothing remained in it but Hope, which, according to Jupiter's decree, should, in due time, afford the unhappy mortals some consolation.

Thus it happened, that the enticements of sensuality brought the first wo into the world, the infatuated Epimetheus frustrating his brother's provident wisdom. The suffering Prometheus deeply felt in his own person the sufferings of mankind. He may be considered as an emblem of the never-ceasing disquietude, the restless, never satisfied desire of mortals: for the liver which the vulture eats, never dies, and the liver was thought by the ancients to be the seat of desire.

Jupiter, not satisfied with having brought misery of every description on men, by means of Pandora's box, finally resolved upon destroying them entirely. For this purpose, he sent a deluge over the whole earth, out of which only the lives of a single couple were saved, that of *Deucalion*, son of Prometheus, and that of *Pyrrha*, daughter of Epimetheus.* Their swimming ark rested on Mount Parnassus, in Phocis, where they found an oracle of Themis, which they consulted on their future fate. The oracle gave the answer, that they should throw the bones of their mother behind them. They accordingly took up stones, considering

* Ovid, Metam. I. 318, ss.

these solid parts of the earth as the bones of their mother, and threw them over their shoulders. When they afterward cast back their eyes, they beheld a new generation of men sprung up from the scattered pebbles, males from those which Deucalion had thrown, and females from those thrown by his companion. This new hardy race throws no suspicion on its origin; their stout hearts fear no danger, mind no threat; they boldly navigate the ocean, defy the raging storms, and face death in the bloody battle.

It is worthy of observation, that in all these ancient fictions, which treat of the origin of men, an inflexible, violent, and warlike disposition is always implied. Thus Cadmus,* in lonely Bœotia, was compelled by the command of the gods, to sow the teeth of a dragon that he had killed, to supply the place of his slain warriors. And out of this seed armed men rose up, who turned their swords against each other, not ceasing from the fight, until there were only five of them remaining, who assisted Cadmus.—In these fables, fancy represents men as being in continual strife with, and raging with their innate cruelty against one another, finding a pleasure in destroying their fellow creatures.

The pains of Prometheus, therefore, lasted until a mortal, by his valour and invincible courage, made himself a path to immortality, and thus reconciled, as it were, Jupiter with mankind. It was Hercules, son of Jupiter and Alcmene, who, at last, with Jupiter's consent, killed the vulture, and delivered the sufferer from his long torments.

But the golden years of mortal men, as it has been already mentioned, were placed by fancy in those times when Jupiter did not yet rule with his thunder, under Saturn's reign, whither imagination collected together all that is dear and desirable to man, but gone to return no more. Saturn's time is the gray time of yore;

* Ovid, Metam. III. 3, ss.

which, as he himself swallowed up his own children, buried in oblivion the fleeting years, but left no trace of bloody wars, destroyed cities, and enslaved nations, which constitute the chief subject of history ever since men began to record the events of the world. At that happy time, when liberty and equality, justice and virtue, still were reigning, men lived, like the gods, in perfect security, without pains or cares, and exempt from the burden of old age. The soil of the earth gave them fruits, without being painfully cultivated; unacquainted with sickness, they died away as if overtaken by a sweet slumber; and, when the lap of the earth received their dust, the souls of the deceased, enveloped in light air, remained as genii with the survivors.

In this manner do the poets portray those golden times, on which imagination, wearied by the scenes of the busy world, dwells with so much delight.

But, in later times, mortal men became the most oppressed of all creatures, and the poets describe the toils and pains of their sorrowful life, as in continual contrast with the careless condition of the gods.

In grateful remembrance of Prometheus, the Athenians used to celebrate a festival, emblematic of the transitory and rapid course of human life. At some distance from the city of Athens, stood an altar dedicated to Prometheus, from which the young Athenians ran a race with burning torches. He who with his torch burning first gained the mark, obtained the prize. The first whose flambeau became extinguished, resigned his place to the second, this one his to the third, and so in succession; if all the torches happened to be put out before the youthful competitors reached the mark, none obtained the prize.

The imagination of the ancients delighted above all in tragical subjects, materials for which they readily found in the relation between gods and men. The wretched mortals are but little noticed by the former;

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they are often the unfortunate objects on which the divine humour may spend itself, and, in addition to this, men are delivered up to an iron necessity, and an inexorable fate; to which, however, the gods are likewise subjected.

NIGHT, (NOX,) AND FATE, (FATUM,)

that rule over gods and men.

When Jupiter was angry at the god of Sleep, Night covered him with her veil, and the Thunderer refrained from his wrath, fearing to offend swift Night.*

There is, therefore, something of which even the gods stand in awe. It is the nightly, mysterious darkness, in which something is hidden that with superior power exercises its influence on gods and men, but cannot be conceived by mortals.

Night covers, conceals; and for this very reason she is the mother both of all that is charming and dreadful. From uncreated Night day-light arose, in which all formations develop themselves, and all creatures enjoy their lives. But she is likewise the mother of *fate;* of the inexorable *Destinies*, (Parcae,) *Lachesis*, *Clotho*, and *Atropos;* of the avenging *Nemesis*, who punishes the undiscovered crimes; of the twin-brothers, *Sleep* and *Death*, of whom the one visits men with mildness and benevolence, while the other has a heart of iron within his bosom. Night is furthermore the mother of the whole train of *Dreams;* of the fabulous *Hesperides*, who on the remotest shores of the ocean guard the golden fruits; of *Deceit*, enveloping himself in darkness; of malicious *Censure;* of fretting *Grief;* of *Trouble* and *Hunger;* of destructive *War;* of *Duplicity* of language; and finally, of *Perjury*.

* Hom. Il. XIV. 256.

Among these children of Night, are comprised all those things which she either conceals from the sight of men, or which fancy itself would fain cover with nocturnal gloom.

Pausanias professes to have seen on the chest of Cypselus, king of Thebes, a representation of Night, exhibiting a female, holding in each of her arms a boy with his arms crossed, and one leg laid upon the other; one boy was white, the other black; the one slept, the other seemed to sleep. According to this relation, and the representations of antique gems, Night, the oldest of things, and the prolific mother of all formations, is commonly represented as a female of youthful strength and beauty; either holding in her arms two handsome boys, Death, with a converted and extinguished torch in his hand, and Sleep, holding the stem of a poppy, or sitting beneath a shading tree, and distributing poppies to Morpheus and his brothers. Morpheus, who is the son of Sleep, and the god of dreams, stands before her in youthful beauty, receiving from her hand the poppy, while his brothers stand behind her, bent to the ground in readiness to pick up the fallen grains.

It appears from these representations, poetical as well as plastic, how carefully the ancients endeavour to transform gloom and terror into soothing images; and, on the other hand, in what a high degree they were sensible of tragical subjects, considering the night-born, inevitable fate, as the power that rules over gods and men, and whose old dominion and concealed plans lie far beyond the horizon of human vision. They did not *know* this power, but *believed* in the dark authority, before which all other powers vanished; for its traces were to be read in the manifold miseries under which mankind sigh. And as mystery, danger, and fear, have their attractions as well as light, security, and peace, the ancients delighted in the representation of dreadful events and wasting destruction, suffering their

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imagination to stray into the dominion of Night, and the world of shadows.

All the before mentioned dreadful beings belong to the class of deities, but to a particular department, (if the expression be admissible,) to that of the necessary connexion of all things.

This necessary connexion of things, or necessity itself, called by the Greeks, Moira and Heimarmene, and by the Romans, Fatum, was that unknown, mysterious being, who, with invisible sceptre, ruled over all other beings. The inexorable Destinies, (Parcae,) were the attendants of this being, and presided chiefly over the life and fate of mortal men: *Clotho* holds the distaff, *Lachesis* spins the thread of life, and *Atropos* with the dreadful scissors cuts it off.

Although the Parcae signify that terrific power, which governs from the dark, whose decrees are passed as soon as they are conceived, and against which there is no resistance, yet they are represented as beautiful females, spinning, and joining, at the same time, in the song of the Sirens. In the highest and almost unlimited power all things are easy and tender. In it there is nothing that is difficult or clumsy; every resistance, even of the mighty, finds in this height its termination. Nothing but the slightest touch of the fingers is requisite, to prescribe to the revolutions of things their paths, and to the mightiest beings their bounds. It is the easiest work of a female hand, whereby the mysterious course of things is managed.

The beautiful representation of the thread of life, delicately spun, and easily cut off, cannot be equalled by any other. The thread does not break, but is cut off by the hand of Destiny with the separating iron. The cause of its ceasing lies in the will of a superior power, which has already firmly and irrevocably disposed of what gods and men still strive to accomplish in their own way.

In vain, for instance, does Jupiter endeavour to pre-

serve the life of his beloved son Sarpedon, in the battle before Troy, against the will of fate.* "Wo to me," he exclaims, "that my Sarpedon must fall under the hand of Patroclus, according to the doom of fate!" And although he would willingly rescue his son from an early death, yet he is obliged to allow him to be slain. Nothing is left to his own will but to deliver the body to Death and sweet Sleep, his messengers, who carry him into his native land, in order that relations and friends may weep over him. In the same manner Ulysses was doomed by Destiny to wander ten years in foreign seas and countries, and, at last, to reach his home without his companions. And in the history of his wanderings, it may be seen, that where every thing appears to afford the greatest pleasure, happiness, and security, there the greatest danger always lurks; as, for example, in the quiet harbour of the Lestrigons, on occasion of the song of the Sirens, and on that of Circe's magic cup. It is the history of human life in general. However near at hand Ulysses beholds the accomplishment of his wishes, all recedes; his tears and fervent prayers are in vain, until it is the will of Destiny that he shall find his home again, and he reaches his native island—sleeping.†

With the idea of the Parcae, the image of the avenging furies, in the imagination of the ancients, is closely connected, and both fictions, therefore, are often insensibly confounded. The tormenting furies, *Alecto*, *Megaera*, and *Tisiphone*, are dreadful, terrible, yet venerated mysterious beings. They derive their origin, as has been already mentioned, from the drops of blood which were shed when the first violence was committed. The mere sight of them is sufficient to terrify a man out of his senses. Their hairs are as many hissing vipers; one hand holds a torch, the other grasps a dagger. They can neither be deceived, nor reconciled or prevailed upon by any supplications; they punish injustice and crime.

* Hom. Il. XVI. 433. † Hom. Od. XIII. 116.

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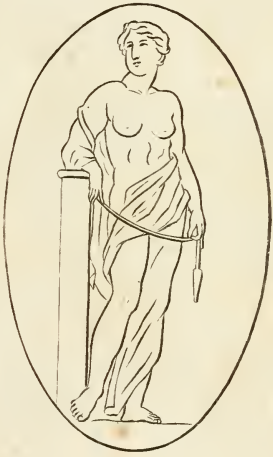

Ancient representations of the Parcae, made by the hand of art, are seldom to be met with. Upon one of these antique gems, which are left us, Lachesis, who spins the thread of life, and is called somewhere the handsome daughter of Necessity, is represented in youthful beauty, sitting and spinning, having one distaff before, and another behind her, and at her feet lie a comic and a tragic mask. These masks are among the happiest allusions to human life, if we behold it with all its serious and comical scenes, during which the tender finger of the goddess never ceases to turn the thread, considering the former as little important as the latter. Another gem shows Lachesis leaning on a pillar, in a quiet posture, carelessly holding the distaff in her left hand, and playing, as it were, with the thread of destiny. This quiet attitude, in which the sublime goddess of Destiny looks down smiling upon the far extended designs of men, is an extremely beautiful idea of the ancient artist. While gods exert all their power, and mortals all their strength, to bring their plans and views to bear, the goddess holds in her hand, playing and smiling, the thread, on which depend the revolutions of things, and the proudest projects of kings both on earth and in heaven.

THE ANCIENT GODS.

The ancient gods have, as is already stated, retreated behind mysterious clouds and mist, through which they appear as yet but dimly, while the modern maintain their place in the dominion of fancy; and, by means of the plastic art, gain distinct forms, by which the embodied power and majesty becomes to mortals an object of veneration, in temples and sacred groves.

But the pristine deities were, in a certain respect, the models for the modern ones. Fancy merely caused the

sublime objects of religious veneration that already existed, to be regenerated in a new and youthful form, ascribing to them descent, name, and native place, in order to unite them more intimately with the ideas and fates of men. Since fancy, however, does not bind herself in her productions to a certain and fixed series of beings, the consequence is, that we sometimes find one and the same deity under different forms. For the ideas of divine, supernatural powers, always existed; but in the course of time, they were blended with human stories, which, on account of their similarity, lost themselves in one another, so that in the magic mirror of the dark ages of antiquity, almost all divine images show themselves again, as if in a magnifying reflector; a circumstance by which the poets of all ages did not fail to profit, their imagination finding in this contexture of several fables a more ample scope.

AMOR, CUPIDO, EROS.

This, of all the gods, is the most ancient. He existed before all generations, and first incited Chaos to bring forth Darkness, out of which sprang Æther and Day.

Aristophanes,* the comet poet, with raillery alludes to this fiction, when he introduces his birds speaking, and, in order to show their own sublime origin, relating that all the mysterious primitive beings had been provided with wings. They assert, that Cupid himself, before any generation, rose out of an egg. The black-winged Night, they say, brought forth the first egg in the wide lap of Erebus, from which, after some time, the charming Cupid, provided with golden wings, sprang up, and marrying the winged Chaos, first begat the race of birds.

We see, from this relation, that these fables are treated as well in a jesting manner by the comic writers, as

* In Avibus.

in a sober style by the tragic; because they were considered as a language of fancy, capable of adopting every turn of ideas, and decking even the most common objects with bright colour and new splendour.

The fable of Cupid still preserves its beauty even in the humorous representation of the comic writer. In this, ancient Cupid, particularly the sublime idea of the almighty power of love, inciting and producing all things, is personified. Among the modern deities, Cupid is born of Venus, and Mars is his father. He is represented as a naked, handsome, winged boy, with bow and arrows. The effects of his arrows are the principal wounds of love, and his power is dangerous to gods and men.

VENUS, APHRODITE.

She was the first beautiful object, that rose and developed itself out of the contest and sedition of the primeval beings. Saturn maimed Uranos; the blood of the latter rendered the sea generative, and out of the foam of the waves rose Aphrodite, the goddess of Beauty and Love. Deriving her origin from the creating power of Heaven, she is the representation of all that is truly beautiful and lovely, and to which all gods and men pay equally their homage.

Among the modern deities, Venus is a daughter of Jupiter and Dione, the latter being a daughter of Æther. She contends with all the goddesses for the prize of beauty, and carries it. She is the wife of Vulcan, the god of fire, but secretly loves Mars, the stern god of War.

It has often been observed, that the representations of the gods are the more sublime, the more they recede into the mist and clouds of the dark ages, and become more manifold and attractive, the more nearly divinity and humanity are connected in them; and yet those sublime images always glance through the tenderness

and pliancy of the modern creations, because fancy cannot altogether dispense with the sublimity of the former.

AURORA, EOS.

Hyperion, (the wanderer on high,) a son of Heaven and Earth, and Thia, a daughter of Heaven, are the parents of Aurora, Helios, and Selene. Among the modern deities, instead of Helios and Selene, Apollo and Diana make their appearance; but Aurora has kept her place, and still shines in original youth and beauty.

She married Astraeus, the son of the Titan Crius, and became the mother of the strong Winds, and the Morning Star. Appearing in the morning from out of the dusky air, she lifts up, with rosy fingers, the veil of night, lends her lustre to the mortals a little while, and disappears again before the splendour of Day, (Helios.)

Aurora is commonly represented standing in a magnificent chariot, which is drawn by winged steeds of snowy whiteness. A brilliant star sparkles upon her forehead; with one hand she grasps the reins, and in the other she holds a torch.

SOL, HELIOS.

Helios likewise belongs to the ancient divine forms, in which, with a few strong features, the grand scenes of nature are personified; for it is always the shining sun himself that appears in all the images of Helios.

His head is surrounded by rays. He gives light both to mortal men and immortal gods. He sees and hears every thing, and discovers all that was kept secret.

To him were sacred those fat oxen* which grazed, without herdsmen, on the island of Sicily, and at the

* Homer, Od. XII. 260.

sight of which he was delighted, whenever he went up and down the skies. When, therefore, the companions of Ulysses had killed several of them, the god of the Sun threatened Jupiter, that he would descend into Orcus, and bring light to the dead, unless he avenged the injury done to him. And Jupiter, terrified by this threat, immediately dashed the ship of Ulysses to pieces, so that all his companions became a prey of the sea.

Sometimes the god of the Sun, on account of his belonging to the family of the Titans, is called Titan, or from his father, with whom he is sometimes confounded in ancient tales, Hyperion, a name which signifies height and sublimity.

Among the modern deities, the driver of the chariot of the Sun, goes by the name of Apollo. He and his sister, Diana, are children of Jupiter and Latona, a daughter of Coeus and Phoebe, of the family of the Titans.

Apollo is one of those divine representations that are complete, and finished to the finest strokes and features. Fancy, adorning him with the charms of eternal youth, calls him the far-shooting god, who bends the silver bow, and the father of poesy, who plays on the golden harp. But, since Apollo cannot fulfil all the different tasks, of being on earth the divine patron and teacher of poesy and music, of delighting the gods in Olympus, with his lyre and song, and of driving, at the same time, the chariot of the Sun; the imagination of the poets seems to have blended together the two persons of Helios and Apollo, merely for the sake of unity, while, in fact, they recognized two different beings, one of them from time immemorial going up and down the sky as the shining Sun, the other wandering on earth, a new-born immortal youth, with golden locks, charming the hearts of gods and mortals with play and song.

Helios is represented standing in a chariot drawn by four milk-white steeds, which he seems to guide along

the vault of the skies. Rays of light encircle his head, and a cock, the emblem of watchfulness, rests upon his hand.

LUNA, SELENE.

The business of Selene is to enlighten the night, by means of her soft rays. Among the modern deities, it is she who drives the chariot of the Moon, and is called Diana, the daughter of Jupiter and Latona.

Diana, as well as her brother Apollo, is represented with bow and arrows, she being at the same time the goddess of the chase. In her Hyperion's daughter has renewed herself, as Helios has done in Apollo, driving, as Selene or Luna, from remotest times the chariot of the Moon; and, as Diana, new-born on earth, roving with bow and quiver through the forests, surrounded by nymphs, who unite with her in the chase of the nimble stag as well as of the fierce wolf.

HECATE.

The Titan Coeus, with Phoebe, a daughter of Heaven, besides giving birth to Latona, became the parent of Asteria, who, marrying Perses, a son of the Titan Crius, was the mother of Hecate.

Hecate, although of the family of the Titans, is highly honoured by Jupiter, as well as by all the other gods, for she belongs to those beings whose power is extended throughout the universe. She is a sort of fatal deity, in whose hands lie the lots of men; she distributes, according to her pleasure, victory and renown; she reigns on the earth, in the sea, and in the air; she bestows growth and prosperity on new-born children; and all the hidden magic powers stand at her command. Under the name of Lucina, she was adored by the Romans, as presiding over birth.

This ancient mysterious goddess is also renewed in the

form of the nightly-wandering Diana, as though she were again created in her.

OCEANUS,

A son of Heaven and Earth, married Tethys, a daughter of Uranos, in connexion with whom he produced the Rivers and Fountains. Though he took no part in the war between the gods, yet he has disappeared with the other pristine deities, his empire being committed, in the great division of the universe, to Neptune.

Neptune, therefore, is now the ruler of the waters, and old Oceanus almost forgotten. The reason of this may be, that, properly speaking, the remotest bounds of the earth, where, according to the ideas of the ancients, the sun sinks into the sea, constitute the dominions of Oceanus; too remote, indeed, for fancy to dwell upon.

Neptune, on the contrary, signifies the sea as far as it is navigated, where he either excites the waves, or restrains them with his mighty trident. For this reason, too, he had everywhere temples erected, altars consecrated, and sacrifices offered.

When Juno, on a certain occasion,* during the war with Troy, wished to detain from Venus her love-inspiring girdle, as a means of deceiving Jupiter; she requested it under the pretence, that she would go to the bounds of the earth to see old Oceanus and his wife Tethys, whose foster-child she had been in the time of Saturn, and that she would use the girdle to terminate a difference that had for a long time subsisted between Venus and herself. The two ancient deities are, of course, far distant from the reign and occupations of the other gods, and thought of merely for the sake of affording Juno a pretence, under which she might dupe her husband.

* Homer, Il. XIV. 200.

OCEANIDES.

The Rivers and Fountains are the offspring of Oceanus. The latter are introduced by the first Greek tragedian,* as pitying Prometheus, when he was chained to the rock, and complaining with him of Jupiter's tyranny.

Metis, one of the daughters of Oceanus, married Jupiter, who, however, upon being told by an oracle that she should have a son, who should be the mightiest of all the gods, drew her over into his own person, and gave birth to Minerva, the goddess of Wisdom, who rose out of his head.

Eurynome, likewise a daughter of Oceanus, and likewise married to Jupiter, is the mother of the three Graces, *Aglaia*, (the elegant,) *Thalia*, (the blooming,) and *Euphrosyne*, (the gay,) who give to all things their proper charms, and bestow on man in particular, dignity, beauty, and hilarity.

Styx, (horrour,) enjoyed the highest veneration among the daughters of Oceanus. She married Pallas, a son of Crius, the Titan, and gave him the powerful children, Zelos, (zeal,) Nike, (victory,) Kratos, (power,) and Bia, (strength.)

In the war of the gods, Styx, according to the advice of her father, went over with her children to Jupiter, and, since that time, the latter have always their seat near the ruler of heaven and earth. At his command, Kratos and Bia led the sufferer Prometheus to the rock, to which he was fastened.

The three sons of Crius the Titan, Pallas, Perses, and Astraeus, disappear with the ancient deities in darkness, and the later fictions seem to infer, that they fought against Jupiter, and were, simultaneously with their parent, hurled into Tartarus.

* Æschylus, in his Prometheus.

By the Titans in Tartarus, and the horrible Styx, the subterraneous fountain, the water of which, trickling in nightly gloom from a high-vaulted rock, forms the stream or lake over which there is no return, the gods swear that dreadful, inviolable oath, the obligation of which cannot be dissolved by any power either in heaven or on earth.

Thus the gods on high swear by the deep, where night reigns, and gloom, but where, at the same time, according to the ideas of the ancients, are the foundations of the universe, on which the preservation of all beings rests.

Where dark Styx rolls its black waves, there is Tartarus, surrounded with a brazen wall, and overcast with threefold night. Here it is, where the Titans lie in their gloomy prison; but here it is, also, where the foundations of the earth, of the sea, and of the starry sky, are laid. Here, too, is the dwelling of Night, always covered with black clouds; before it stands Atlas, Japet's son, bearing upon his head and shoulders the burden of the sky. Here it is, where day and night always meet, but never dwell with one another.

At the entrance to the prison, in which the sons of Earth are shut up, is the dwelling of their watchmen, Cottus, Gyges, and Briareus.

MNEMOSYNE, (MEMORY.)

This beautiful product of fancy, the personification of memory, as the source and repository of every art and science, belongs likewise to the ancient deities; for Mnemosyne, too, is a daughter of Heaven and Earth. She, the contemplative, thoughtful, recollecting virgin, remained with her relations, the Titans, until she became Jupiter's wife. She is the parent of the Muses, who divided among themselves that treasure of wisdom which had been the dowry of their venerable mother, and possessed by her alone.

THEMIS, (JUSTICE.)

Themis is likewise a daughter of Heaven and Earth. Prometheus, in the tragic poet, who represents the life and fate of the sufferer for mankind, calls her his mother, who, as one person, under different names, predicted the future.

It has already been observed, that the ancient deities still maintained some important influence by giving advice and oracles. The most ancient oracle was Earth herself, and it is joined in nearest succession by that of Themis, which, after the deluge of the earth, gave the oracle before mentioned, on Mount Parnassus, to Deucalion and Pyrrha.

Prometheus was taught by Themis to anticipate the future, and as, after the war of the gods, the Titans did not follow his advice, he went over along with Themis to Jupiter, whom he assisted with his prudence, in subduing the sons of Earth, and by whom he was afterwards rewarded with chains and sufferings.

But Themis having become Jupiter's wife, brought the *Horæ*, (Hours,) whose names are Eunomia, (wise system of laws,) Dike, (punishment,) and Irene, (peace.) They are companions of the Graces, and make it their business to promote unanimity by equity and justice.—Themis, as goddess of Justice, still maintains her place among the modern deities, and lends to men, the unfortunate children of Prometheus, her assistance, at least by giving them advice. In this quality, as presiding over the distribution of justice, she is commonly represented as a noble and majestic figure, having her eyes covered with a fillet, and holding a balance in one hand, while the other grasps a sword.

The ancient poets also mention Astræa, a daughter of hers, who descended from heaven to live as a tutelar deity among mortal men, distributing justice, composing differences, teaching the principles of integrity, and in-

culcating an abhorrence of injustice and crime. Pitying the unfortunate race of Prometheus, she dwelled with them for a long time; but when she saw that, notwithstanding all her endeavours, justice was overthrown by the misdeeds of men, and all reverence of what is holy banished from their lives, she left them in disgust, and fled back to heaven.

As Thetis reveals to Jupiter the future, or the decision of fate, one particular fiction represents the Parcae, who, according to another, are the daughters of old Night, as children of Jupiter and Thetis. Consequently, the Parcae appear in a twofold condition; as the daughters of Night and attendants on fate, and again as the daughters of Jupiter, who, in compliance with the will of fate, execute their parent's decrees.

Such twofold appearances of divine personifications, are, in the dream-like world of imagination, not unfrequently to be met with. The course of time beginning, as it were, anew with Jupiter, almost all that had existed before him is created by him once more; a representation which tends to exalt his power, and to glorify him in the character of the *father* of the gods.

PONTUS.

Earth produced from herself Uranos, or the Sky, the mountains with their woody heads, and Pontus, or the barren Sea; afterward, and not before her marriage with Uranos, she also brought forth the bottomless Ocean.

Earth bears Pontus, that is to say, the Mediterranean, the well known and navigated sea, as well as the Mountains, in her lap; in other words, she brought these grand exhibitions out of herself, in the same manner as she likewise wove around herself the atmosphere, out of the misty vapours arising from her. But, where the sky unites with her in marriage—where the vault of the sky seems to rest upon her—where, at the remotest east

and west, the sun rises and sets, there the unknown, unlimited Ocean, encircles her in a wide circumference.

Pontus and Earth are the parents of mild Nereus, of Thaumas, and Eurybia, who bears a heart of iron in her bosom, of Phorcys also, and fair Ceto.

NEREUS

Is the personification of the quiet, smooth sea. He is mild, upright, and never unmindful of equity and justice; he loves moderation, and hates violence. He casts his quiet look into times to come, and predicts the fates which they bring.

When Paris carried the eloped Helena from Greece across the sea, Nereus predicted to him the consequences which should be connected with this elopement, revealing to him the downfall of Troy.

Nereus married Doris, the fair daughter of Oceanus, by whom he had a numerous offspring. The divine couple embracing one another in tender love over the waves of the sea, is a beautiful picture of imagination, which has often been used by ancient and modern artists.

When Neptune usurped the realm of Oceanus, Nereus, with his family, retreated to the Egean sea, and he was worshipped in all the maritime towns of Greece. He is represented as an old man, crowned with sea-weeds.

The children of Nereus and Doris are the

NEREIDES.

They, as well as the daughters of Oceanus, constitute a great number. And it cannot be otherwise, since the imagination of the ancients suffers no place to remain unpeopled, and therefore forms a multitude of creatures, and builds a variety of dwellings in a region where men cannot live, rearing splendid habitations for immortals, where mortals would find their graves. The

rising of the marine deities from their crystal palaces up to the surface of the waters, afforded subjects for some attractive fables.

When *Galatea*, a daughter of Nereus, once rose out of the waves, and the monstrous Cyclop Polypheme saw her, he felt himself immediately wounded by the arrow of Cupid, and ever after, as often as he beheld her, vainly poured out his sufferings in heart-rending complaints.

Thetis, another of the daughters of Nereus, (who must not be confounded with Tethys the wife of Oceanus,) became, in the same manner as Metis, dangerous to Jupiter, who had thoughts of marrying her; it being predicted by an oracle, that the son she should bring forth should be mightier than his father. Therefore, Thetis, by the contrivance of the gods, became married to a mortal man, the Thessalian king, Peleus, whose son Achilles far surpassed his father in valour and renown; for his mother, Thetis, plunged him in the Styx, by which means his whole body, except the heel, by which she held him, became invulnerable. But afterwards, in the Trojan war, he received the deadly wound on this very heel.

Thetis was always a favourite with Jupiter; for when the modern gods at one time intended to bind their father and sovereign, it was Thetis who saved him from injury, and spared him the mortification. Informed of the dreadful plot by the foreseeing Nereus, she sent up the hundred-armed Briareus from the deep of the sea, to Jupiter's assistance; and when the gods beheld that formidable giant sitting on the side of the Thunderer, none of them was bold enough to lay hands on him.

Amphitrite, who is likewise a daughter of Nereus, became the wife of Neptune. Even among the modern deities she occupies a conspicuous place. The queen of the waves is represented as seated in a car, shaped like a shell, and drawn by dolphins; a sail is

held by sea-nymphs, and swelled by the breath of Zephyrs; she herself holds, like the god to whom she is wedded, a trident in her hand, to restrain the flood of her wild element.

The names of fifty daughters of Nereus are mentioned, yet only a few of them are concerned in the history of the gods. The greater part serve to form a splendid retinue, when Thetis or Amphitrite show themselves on the surface of the sea.

THAUMAS, (ASTONISHMENT.)

Wonder, astonishment at the grand spectacles of nature, rises out of the sea, and with a few leading features, is personified in Thaumas, a son of Pontus.

Thaumas is the father, and the Oceanide *Electra*, the mother of that wonderful being, who, on account of the rapidity with which her feet touch the earth, while her head has not left the clouds, is represented as the female messenger of the immortals, *Iris*, the Rainbow.

Children of the same parents, are the swift winged Harpies, *Aëllo* and *Ocypete*, who, like raging tornadoes, rushing forth from the sea, catch hold of their prey; a horrour to mortals, who are unable to resist their rapacious claws.

EURYBIA,

A daughter of Pontus, and wife to Crius, the Titan. She belongs to those beings who are enveloped in mysterious night, and all that can be said of her is, that she bore a heart of iron in her bosom.

PHORCYS AND FAIR CETO,

the parents of the Monsters.

Phorcys, and his wife Ceto, are children of Pontus, and parents of

The Grææ, (the old,) *Dino*, (terror,) *Pephredo*, (shuddering,) and *Enyo*, (horrour,) three decrepid virgins, who were gray with age from their very birth, had all three together but one tooth and one eye, which they used alternately. They lived at the end of the earth, where eternal night reigns, so that they never beheld either the rays of the sun or the light of the moon :—

The Gorgons, *Euryale*, *Stheno*, and *Medusa*, with terrible countenances, and snakes twisted round their heads, instead of hair; nobody was permitted to look at them, without being converted into stone :—

The dragon, that watches, at the limits of the earth, the golden fruits of the Hesperides.

From the blood of Medusa, when she was killed by Perseus, *Chrysaor*, with the golden sword, and the winged *Pegasus*, sprang.

Chrysaor married *Callirrhoe*, a daughter of Oceanus. Hence sprang the triple-headed giant, *Geryon*, and *Echidna*, who was upwards a beautiful nymph, but terminated below in a hideous, coiling dragon.

With her, *Typhaon*, a howling tempest, produced the triple-headed dog, *Cerberus*, that watched the gates leading to Pluto's dismal realm; the two-headed dog, *Orthrus;* the *Lernean Hydra;* and the fire-vomiting *Chimera*. Echidna became, also, the mother of the *Nemean lion*, and the mysterious *Sphinx*.

These are the descendants of Phorcys and Ceto. The creation of the Monsters terminates with the birth of Sphinx, a personification of the mysterious and enigmatical. It seems, however, as if these Monsters had sprung into existence only for the sake of trying afterwards

the valour and courage of the strong, and of being vanquished by those godlike heroes who, by their bold deeds, rise to immortality.

THE RIVERS.

To them, also, imagination gave personality. As sons of Oceanus, they belong to the ancient deities, but are partly connected with the later history of the gods, in which they appear as active beings, as for example, Scamander, Achelous, Peneus, Alpheus, Inachus.

The personification of the running waters gives rise also to beautiful fictions. Thus the head of a people, whose origin is not to be ascertained, is called the son of the river, near the shores of which his descendants dwell. By such fables, men were more intimately united with nature, and became as if nearer related to it.

PROTEUS,

A son of Oceanus and Tethys, is that famous keeper of Neptune's seals, who, like mysterious nature, that, under a thousand different forms, escapes the inquiring looks of mortals, could assume whatever shape he pleased, could change himself into fire, water, animal, and plant; and who, to those only that held him fast with vigorous arms, appeared, at last, in his proper shape, revealing to them the truth, for he was endowed, also, with the spirit of divination.

CHIRON.

Saturn entertained a secret love for Philyra, the daughter of the river-god, Asopus. In order to elude the jealous eyes of Rhea, he assumed the shape of a horse, and thus produced Chiron, who, though half man and half horse, was possessed of great wisdom, and

afterwards became the tutor of kings and heroes, who owe to him their virtues and accomplishments.

NEMESIS.

She is, like the Parcae, a daughter of Night. Her office is to preside, like Themis, over the distribution of justice, yet in a manner somewhat different. She baffles pride and haughtiness, she rewards virtue and punishes vice, tracing particularly those crimes which are perpetrated in secret, and concealed from the eyes of men. Her vengeance, if once provoked, is sure, however long delayed, to fall at last. Having belonged, among the pristine deities, to those mysterious beings who are regarded with awe and veneration, both by gods and men, she retains the same rank among the modern gods.

PROMETHEUS,

The wisest among the Titans, whose creative genius formed man, has, like most of the ancient gods, in the later divine transactions, no influence left, except through the means of prediction or advice; his grand appearance dissolves in mist.

JUPITER, ZEUS,

the father of the gods.

In the representation of the ancient deities, the imagination of the poets plays with grand images only. Its objects are the great spectacles which nature exhibits; the sky and the earth, the sea and the power of the seditious elements, represented under the images of the Titans, the beaming sun and the shining moon: all which objects, being endowed with personality only

through a few striking features, are fitter materials for poetry than for plastic art.

Out of the mist which envelops those beings, the more modern divine appearances spring forth in clear light and distinct forms. Now we behold imperial Jove, the mighty god of thunder, with the eagle at his feet; Neptune, the shaker of the earth, with his trident; the majestic Juno, accompanied by her peacock; Apollo, in eternal youth, with the silver bow; the blue-eyed Minerva, with helmet and spear; the golden Venus; the virgin Diana, with her bow and arrow: the brazen god of war, Mars; and Mercury, swift messenger of the divinities.

The highest splendour reflects on Jupiter, for he is the father and sovereign of the newly created world of gods. Among the modern deities, only Neptune, Pluto, Juno, Vesta, and Ceres, are, together with Jove himself, of ancient origin; the greater number are Jupiter's own offspring.

Among the pristine deities, he gave birth, along
with Metis, to the Oceanide, Minerva;
with Mnemosyne, to the Muses;
with Themis, to the Horae;
with Eurynome, to the Graces;
with Latona, to Apollo and Diana;
with Maia, the daughter of Atlas, to Mercury.

Yet all these sublime goddesses, and august mothers of heavenly beings, retreat into shade before the reigning Juno, who, in preference to all others, maintains the right of being the Thunderer's lawful spouse, and whose jealousy often causes her husband, after he had vanquished and subdued the unruly sons of the earth, to sigh in the midst of all the splendour and glory of his divine power.

The marriage of Jupiter and Juno is to be considered merely as a fictitious representation of fancy, according to human notions and human relations. Viewed in the clear light of reason, such a representation, as well as

all others connected with it, appears, indeed, irrational and ridiculous; but not so, if beheld with the poetical eye of imagination, that forms her gods after the images of men, as well as her men after the images of the gods.

In this sense, too, Juno is the goddess of marriage, and gave to Jupiter a daughter, Lucina, or Ilithyia, who assists those that are about to be delivered. She is likewise the mother of Hebe, the goddess of youth, an emblematical representation of propagation, whereby the human race, always new-born, maintains itself in eternal youth. But Juno is likewise the mother of Mars, the stern god of war, with whom Jupiter often became so angry as to threaten him with expulsion from Olympus; nevertheless, he always spared him, because he was his own son. Jupiter, having given birth to Minerva, out of his own head, Juno, in spite of him, brought forth Vulcan, without a father.

The very jealousy, however, by which Juno was prompted to give birth to the father of arts, contrived many hinderances and difficulties to the creations of Jupiter, and, consequently, to what is illustrious and sublime. As Jove, when he was scarcely born, could, with difficulty, be saved from the snares of a persecuting power, so the daughter of Saturn strove to destroy, in its very birth, every grand and divine production, or, if possible, to hinder its being brought to light.

When, therefore, the meek Latona was to bring forth Diana and Apollo, Juno caused her to be persecuted by a monstrous dragon, and bound the Earth by an oath not to afford her an asylum where she could be delivered. Delos, as a swimming island, was happily not included in the unnatural compact, and there, at last, Latona found a place of refuge. On that island, between an olive and a palm-tree, she brought forth first Diana and then Apollo.

When Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, king of Thebes, was pregnant with Bacchus, Juno, under the

figure of Beroe, Semele's nurse, knew how to persuade her, by black artifice, to ask a visit from Jupiter, in his true divine person. Jupiter swore; he approached her as the Thunderer, surrounded by lightnings, and the wretched Semele perished in the flames. Young Bacchus was saved by Jupiter, and hidden in his thigh.

When Alcmena was about to be delivered of Hercules, Juno sat down before the house, and, holding her knees in close embrace, caused Alcmena great inward sufferings and difficulty. From the very time of his birth, she persecuted Hercules himself, but gained nothing by all her persecutions; his heroic valour was tried, his heart steeled, and the path was opened to him to the seat of the gods and immortality.

Of Juno's jealousy, there subsists, as a well-invented fiction relates, a constellation of the sky, as an indelible monument. She transformed the nymph Callisto, whom Jupiter loved, into a she bear; and afterwards, upon her being placed among the stars by the king of the heavens, Juno desired Oceanus not to receive this new sparkling apparition into his bosom; and thus it came to pass, that the constellation of the Bear never sets.

As winds stir up the quiet sea, so the jealousy of Juno brings life into the fictions of imagination, and even this jealousy is not entirely destitute of sublimity, because, being endowed with divine authority and power, it checks even the boasted omnipotence of the Thunderer.

Jupiter is represented as holding the highest seat in the assembly of the immortals. He frowns, and Olympus shakes in its innermost recesses; he smiles, and, on a sudden, the whole sky is irradiated. But heaven is not the only theatre of his operations; he walks on earth. And in order here to propagate his divine power in a race of heroes, he fixes his eyes upon the daughters of men, always enveloping his deity within illusive

forms, to spare them the fate of Semele, or to accomplish his designs.

From his seat on high he pours himself in a golden shower into Danäe's lap, and she brings forth the valiant Perseus, who, with powerful arm, subdues monsters.

With the majestic neck of a swan he clings to Leda's bosom, and she becomes the mother of the magnanimous Pollux, and the godlike Helena, the most beautiful woman that earth ever produced.

In the strength of a mettled ox, he invites, with tender look, the virgin Europa to bestride his back, and carries her through the floods of the sea to the shores of Crete, where she brings forth Minos, who gives laws to the nations, and rules over them with power and wisdom.

In these fictions all nature is idolized, and, by consequence, the very animals are considered as sacred beings; so that nothing mean or abject lies in the idea of representing the supreme deity in any form that is offered by all-comprising nature. That an opposing, jealous, yet eminent power, strives to check the highest authority, is likewise entirely appropriate to the genius of these fables, according to which the beautiful and strong, that shall develop itself, must struggle against opposition and difficulties, and sustain many trials and dangers, until its value is approved.

Henceforth the history of the gods is mingled and interwoven with that of men. The wars among the former having ceased, there is now nothing left that is worth their attention, but the lives and fates of mortals. Exalting the one, and depressing the other, arbitrarily, the divine power often trifles with them, but, on the other hand, often assists eminent virtue and valour.

VESTA, (HESTIA.)

Vesta, even among the modern deities, continues a mysterious being. She could never be induced to leave the virgin state, and a chaste veil always covered her

form. She was said to transfuse the earth with sacred warmth.

CERES, (DEMETER.)

By her, the prolific, and all-nourishing daughter of Saturn and Rhea, Jupiter was the father of Proserpina, (Persephone,) who, carried off by Pluto, became queen of the shades.

Thus, Pluto and Proserpina, are now, among the modern deities, the rulers in Orcus. Deep below them is Tartarus; there lie the Titans vanquished. The upper world is divided between Jupiter and Neptune. Chaos is unclosed and developed; the elements are separated, and heavenly splendour surrounds the habitation of the blessed immortals that dwell on Olympus.

NEW CREATION OF MEN.

The race of men, when once existing, seemed to be imperishable. In vain did Jupiter send his deluge to destroy it. It grew up again out of pebbles, and sprouted anew from dragons'-teeth. From the slime of the humid earth arose men; and men sprang forth from the forest oaks that gave them food.

But the golden age had passed, and the arts which could render human life supportable, were not yet invented. Deprived of fire, mortal men were of all creatures the most unhappy; and by many wants and pains, were obliged to atone for an existence, of which they were not guilty. Roused, however, by the great mother of inventions, necessity, the long concealed divine spark, at last began to enkindle in their souls, and they became, through their own power, what no god could make them; no longer dependant on the boon of any immor-

tal, they owed to their own unremitted exertion every good they possessed.

As the mortal foe of the Titans, and the unrelenting persecutor of Prometheus, Jupiter strove to ruin the race of men. But, as the quiet power, that is superior to its own wrath, and in concord with fate, he, at last, calmly beheld the rising of new generations, that by sufferings, strength, and perseverance, became assimilated to the gods themselves.

"The sire of gods and men, with hard decrees,
Forbids our plenty to be bought with ease,
And wills that mortal men, inur'd to toil,
Should exercise, with pains, the grudging soil;
Himself invented first the shining share,
And whetted human industry by care;
Himself did handicrafts and arts ordain,
Nor suffer'd sloth to rust his active reign.
Ere this, no peasant vex'd the peaceful ground
Which only turfs and greens for altars found;
No fences parted fields, nor marks nor bounds
Distinguish'd acres of litigious grounds;
But all was common, and the fruitful earth
Was free to give her unexacted birth.
Jove added venom to the viper's brood,
And swell'd, with raging storms, the peaceful flood;
Commission'd hungry wolves t' infest the fold,
And shook from oaken leaves the liquid gold;
Remov'd from human reach the cheerful fire,
And from the rivers bade the vine retire;
That studious need might useful arts explore,
From furrow'd fields to reap the foodful store,
And force the veins of clashing flints t' expire;
The lurking seeds of their celestial fire.
Then first on seas the hollow'd alder swam;
Then sailors quarter'd heav'n, and found a name
For ev'ry fix'd and ev'ry wand'ring star—
The Pleiads, Hyads, and the Northern Car;
Then toils for beasts, and lime for birds were found.
And deep-mouth'd dogs did forest-walks surround;
And casting-nets were spread in shallow brooks,
Drags in the deep, and baits were hung on hooks.
Then saws were tooth'd, and sounding axes made
(For, wedges first did yielding wood invade;)
And various arts in order did succeed,
(What cannot endless labour, urg'd by need?)"

Dryden's Virg. Georg

After Prometheus has retreated from the theatre and transactions of the world, those who take his place in the great cause of humanity, the new fathers of mankind, by whose assistance they rise, as it were, from oblivion, are, besides Deucalion, Ogyges, Cecrops, and Inachus.

OGYGES.

During the time of Ogyges, a deluge occurred, which is still anterior to that of Deucalion. The horizon of all history is closed by the Ogygian flood, and even the wide field of fable here finds its limits.

Ogyges, who reigned over the country afterwards called Attica and Bœotia, and Thebe, a daughter of Jupiter, are the parents of Eleusinus, who is said to have founded, even at that early period, the city of Eleusis, and established the Eleusinian mysteries.

INACHUS.

A considerable part of ancient history is traced back to Inachus, a son of Oceanus. Inachus was a stream that watered the fields of Argolis in Peloponnesus; fiction gave it personality, and made it the author of the people that lived around its shores.

His son, Phoroneus, taught them the use of fire; and having before been dispersed in the woods, he persuaded them to unite and build themselves contiguous dwellings. Thus Phoroneus, causing his people to make the first step toward civilization, became one of the earliest and principal benefactors of mankind.

Io, a daughter of Inachus, loved by Jupiter, and persecuted by Juno, was transformed into a cow, and furiously driven over the whole earth, until she found a resting place in Egypt. There she had a temple erected, and was worshipped as a goddess, (Isis.) She gave a son to Jupiter, called Epaphus, from whom sprang a royal

race, that afterwards reigned again in Greece, founding their right of regal authority on descent from old Inachus.

Libya, a daughter of the Egyptian king Epaphus, gave two sons to Neptune, Belus and Agenor; the latter was king in Tyre. Cadmus, who is said to have brought the first letters to Greece, and to have founded the city of Thebes, was his son, and Europa, the mother of Minos, his daughter.

Belus, the other grandson of Epaphus, was the father of Danaus and Egyptus, the former of whom came over from Egypt to Greece, and reigned in Argos. From him Acrisius descended, the father of Danae, and grandfather of the heroic Perseus. Alcæus was a son of Perseus, and a grand-daughter of Alcæus, was Alcmena, the mother of Hercules.

These are the principal personages descended from the heroic family of Inachus. From the impossibility of tracing back any family of kings or heroes farther than Inachus, the common saying of the ancient poets arose: "though thou canst derive thy origin from old Inachus, thou still remainest a victim of inexorable Orcus."

CECROPS.

With him there arose, in the country of Attica, a new race of men, whom he, like the son of Inachus, taught to live together in cottages, and among whom he first established matrimony; for which reason he is represented with a double face, that of a male and a female.

In considering the city of Athens, which afterwards became the most cultivated of all the cities of Greece, the idea of culture in art as well as science, is the leading one up to its remotest fictitious history. After Cecrops had laid the foundation of the city, Neptune, and the goddess of science and art, Pallas Athene, disputed, whose name should be applied to the newly rising city;

the latter obtained the victory, and after her the city was called Athens.

DEUCALION.

Although Deucalion is commonly considered and called the renewer of the destroyed family of Prometheus, yet we see that other traditions, still more ancient, are connected with the fictions respecting him, and that they confine Deucalion's new creation or formation of men to a part of Greece.

Amphyction, a son of Deucalion, first established a sacred association among the several tribes in Greece, who, by means of common consultations, were so closely united together, as to form, as it were, but one nation. This sacred institution was called, after the name of its founder, the Amphictyonic Council, or the meeting of the Amphictyons.

Hellen, Deucalion's second son, from whose name the Greeks are called Hellenes, reigned in Thessaly, and was the father of Eolus, who became the ancestor of many heroes. The most renowned among them are, Meleager, Bellerophon, and Jason. Meleager killed the Caledonian boar; Bellerophon vanquished the monster Chimera; and Jason won the golden fleece.

THE ANCIENT INHABITANTS OF ARCADIA.

These were considered as the most ancient of men, who existed before any era, and whose origin fell beyond any record, a circumstance which fiction expresses in the words: "they were ere the moon was." With this people, too, the original simplicity and innocence of manners degenerated into vice and depravity to such a degree, that Jupiter continued to hurl his thunderbolts upon the land of Arcadia so long, that, at last, even earth stretched out her arms, imploring mercy.

THE FOREST OF DODONA.

In Chaonia, a country of Epirus, was an old forest of oaks, called the Dodonian, with an oracle of Jupiter. In this forest imagination likewise discovered a suitable place to fix the abode of the first men, who knew of no other nourishment but acorns.

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE GODS AFTER THE IMAGES OF MEN.

It has already been observed, that the fancy of the ancients creates her gods after the images of men, as well as her men after the images of the gods. And here it is that we must be chiefly on our guard, not to pass an unjust judgment on the times of old. Antiquity is not to be viewed and explained according to the customs and ideas of modern times, as little as the plays of childhood are to be considered and interpreted by the earnest pursuits of manhood, or the grave wisdom of old age. While we live, as it were, in the age of reason, the ancients lived in that of imagination, which, beholding the rock walk, hearing the brook speak, discovering life in the flower, animates with this life a being of her own creation, like Prometheus, who breathed into the bosoms of his creatures of clay the divine spark of the sun to quicken them.

The infinite, the unlimited, without shape and form, is, to fancy, a melancholy object. Therefore, she lays hold upon things formed and limited, in order to use them as patterns for her own creations; and as a seafaring man, who descries from afar the land, gains new strength and courage, so the consoling aspect of human form is, to fancy, the sure helm wherewith to steer on the vast ocean of nature's grand exhibitions.

This feeling was particularly lively with the ancients. The boundless masses which surround man, as sky, earth, sea, gained in their serene imagination form and shape. They endeavoured to unite the tenderness of the formed objects with the strength of the unformed and shapeless: and, as in the tall, erect body of man, the solidity of the oak is joined to the pliancy of the tender stalk; so the creative genius of the ancients connected with the power of the raging element, and the majesty of the rolling thunder, the human features, the eloquent lips, the winking brows, and the speaking eye. Thus the image is drawn; it is the image of

JUPITER OLYMPIUS.

That being to whose hands imagination intrusted the thunder, must be superior to, and yet, at the same time, in harmony with human form; because a thinking power was to be represented, and the capacity of thought can be indicated through no other form, than through the features of the expressive face of man. And to so high a degree of perfection rose the representing art of the Greeks, inspired and consecrated by its subjects, that it exhibited works similar indeed, yet far superior to its models, excluding every thing contingent, and uniting, on the other hand, all essential features expressive of beauty, power, and sublimity.

Since, however, in representing their gods, the idea of power is always the leading one with the ancients, the expression of that power predominates in their sublimest formations. Jupiter's weighty head, from which wisdom has been born, bends forward; it meditates and directs the changes of things; it ponders their revolutions. Among all the celestials, the power of him who sways the thunder is the most unlimited, and whenever it is restrained, it is by invincible fate, and the wiles of Juno.

Jupiter, therefore, is most frequently represented as

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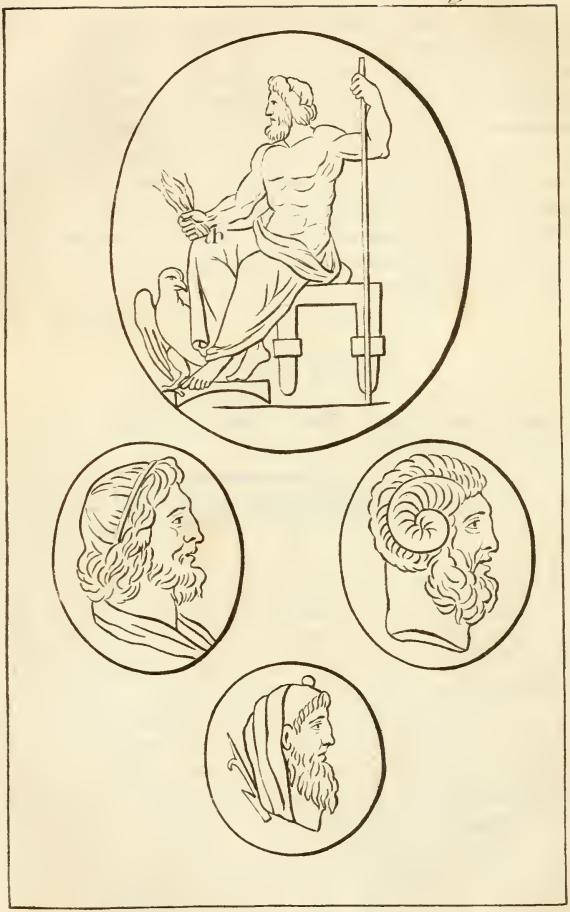

Moritz's Mythology.

feeling in himself the fulness of his authority, and rejoicing therein. An ancient gem shows him sitting on his throne, quietly looking into the universe, holding the thunder in his right hand, and in his left the imperial sceptre, with the eagle at his feet. Another contains his bust, with the horns of a ram. This is the image of Jupiter Ammon, who was principally worshipped in Libya, where he gave oracles. Sometimes he is seen with his shoulders wrapped in the folds of a cloak, and his forehead adorned with the royal diadem. Even the curled beard and hair, in the representations of Jupiter, are indicative of inward power and youthful strength. He knits his black brows, he shakes the ambrosial locks of his head, and Olympus trembles.

In the language of the most ancient poet, Jupiter himself, threatening the other gods, proclaims his power in the following manner:—

"League all your forces then, ye powers above,
Join all, and try th' omnipotence of Jove:
Let down our golden, everlasting chain,
Whose strong embrace holds heaven, and earth, and main.
Strive all, of mortal, and immortal birth,
To drag, by this, the Thunderer down to earth:
Ye strive in vain! If I but stretch this hand,
I heave the gods, the ocean, and the land;
I fix the chain to great Olympus' height,
And the vast world hangs trembling in my sight!
For such I reign, unbounded and above;
And such are men, and gods, compar'd to Jove."*

From this representation, it is also evident, that in the most perfect idea of Jupiter, the *surrounding All* was comprised. As, however, in this idea every thing is exalted and ennobled, what wonder that those heroes, whose ancestors were unknown, should be called sons of Jupiter. They were the eminent children of the universe, and, consequently, the genuine sons of Jove.

And with such a deity—uniting in his being the mean and trifling with the majestic and sublime—with

* Pope's Homer, Il. VIII. 5. ss.

such a deity fancy was free to trifle now and then; she was free to grasp herself the golden chain, in order to draw down Jupiter from his Olympic seat. Thus she herself was drawn up to the skies.

Nevertheless, even in these fictions of imagination, deity always appears exceedingly distant from, and far superior to humanity. A modern poet describes this distance and superiority, with the true genius of the ancients, in the following lines:—

THE BOUNDS OF HUMANITY.

"When the most ancient, holy father, with quiet hand, sows blessed lightnings over the earth from rolling clouds, I kiss the lowest hem of his robe, my faithful heart deeply impressed with filial awe.

"For with gods man must not strive, whoever he may be. If he raises himself, with proud head, to touch the stars, the soles of his feet find no firm resting place; he is the sport of clouds and winds.

"And if with firm, marrowy bones, he stands upon the well founded and lasting earth, he rises not high enough to dare a comparison with the oak or with the vine.

"What distinguishes immortals from men?—That many waves pass on before the former, a stream eternal: while the wave raises us, the wave swallows us; we sink to the bottom.

"Small is the circle that bounds our life; and the endless chain of their existence is formed by many lasting generations."

GOETHE.

In nature, fancy could find nothing more pure and sublime, than the earth-surrounding æther, or sky; and the æther, therefore, was chosen by her for the archetype of the chief deity. Thus an ancient poet:* "Thou beholdest the high, unmeasured æther, that with ten-

* Hesiod. Theog.

der embrace clasps the earth to his bosom; him thou must regard as god supreme, him regard as Jupiter!"

JUNO.

Juno is the personification of sublime beauty united with power. Her chief archetype was the atmosphere with which the earth is encompassed; it adheres in conjugal union to the æther that rests upon it.

In the atmosphere, pierced by the glittering rays of the sun, the variegated rainbow is produced, which was the archetype of Iris, Juno's swift messenger, who, standing in the clouds, announced the presence of the august queen of the heavens to mankind. Among earthly appearances, the majestic tail of a peacock bears the strongest resemblance to the rainbow: a peacock, therefore, was the bird sacred to Juno, and her chariot is drawn through the sky by peacocks.

Juno is called the reigning, the large-eyed, the white-armed; epithets which rather tend to inspire us with veneration than with love. It is not the tender charm of the eye that graces her image, it is greatness commanding awful respect; and of all those parts which constitute the figure of the reigning queen of the heavens, poetry celebrates none but the beauty of the powerful arm.

And, indeed, Juno acts a part in almost all the violent events in heaven and on earth. The raging elements, of which the whole train of human passions is but a copy in miniature, are likewise personated in her; for the violence of the elements is chiefly displayed in the lower atmosphere. Here they fight, they urge, and press upon each other; here they rob, and spoil, and breathe revenge. The rock groans in the furious sea, and under the blast of the storm the billow howls. Here is the workshop of continual formation and destruction; here the theatre of insurrection and war, the seat of wrath, and mourning, and misery;

here Hector must fall, Hecuba pull out her gray hairs, and Troy become a prey to the flames.

But above the atmosphere, in the pure æther, every thing is permanent and regular; there the celestial globes complete their course undisturbed, and nothing is there that urges or hinders, nothing that brings discord into the harmony of the spheres.

The top of high Olympus rises through the clouds into the still æther, and thither imagination transfers the abode of the blessed immortals, who, exempt themselves from cares and pains, sip the sweet nectar amid the sounds of Apollo's lyre, and laugh at their quarrels with each other for the sake of mortals, destined to bear the burden of toils and sorrows.

In this manner fancy always reunites the human form of her deities with their heavenly archetype. The swan in the bosom of Leda, as the blue æther surrounds the earth, and the blue æther again opens to show the ruler of Olympus, with his ambrosial locks, holding the nectar-cup in his hand. Juno pours around the globe of the earth a transparent mist, in which the rainbow displays its splendid colours, and the same Juno wanders on foot through this very mist, to visit her foster parents at the bounds of the earth. Fancy, not choosing to dwell for a long time on those objects which she, in a certain manner, attempts to explain by her personifications, rather delights to rove among the beings themselves, to whom she gave personality. When Juno opposed herself to Jupiter, he suspended her on a chain from Olympus, into her own dominion, the atmosphere, with an anvil fastened to each of her feet. The heavenly and sublime had thus to suffer the disgrace of being drawn down, and all celestials mourned at the sight; but fancy, the earth-born daughter, delights in the sport.

Juno represents in her person the high, commanding beauty, which is superior to the delicacy of female charms, and does not need them. When, therefore, the heavenly queen intended to win Jupiter by charming

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loveliness, she was obliged to borrow the girdle of Venus, who, by her soft beauty, had obtained the prize, when the shepherd on the top of Mount Ida, passed the bold, decisive sentence.

Juno is commonly represented by plastic art in her whole regal splendour, sitting upon a throne or on Jupiter's eagle, holding in her one hand a sceptre, and in the other a veil spangled with stars that flows round her head. A peacock is commonly seen at her feet.

PHŒBUS, APOLLO.

The chief archetype of Apollo, is the sun's ray in eternally youthful splendour. It assumes human form, and with it rises to perfect beauty, in which the very expression of destructive power melts away in the harmony of the youthful features.

As in the rays of the sun, which are both beneficent and destructive, fertilizing and producing decay, creation and destruction are united, so the divine form of which those rays are the archetype, unites in itself both terror and mildness. For the god of beauty and youth, who delights in lyre and song, carries, at the same time, the quiver upon his shoulder, draws the silver-bow, and sends in wrath his arrows among men, to cause by means of them contagious sicknesses; or he kills them with soft weapons.

The twins of Latona are the twin-deities of death. Dividing the human race between them, Apollo takes man for his aim, Diana woman, and thus they kill with mild arrow whomsoever old age has stolen upon. Like leaves of verdant trees, that keep themselves in a state of sempiternal bloom and fresh colour merely by successively falling off and decaying; or, like those sacred doves of Jupiter, which, flying by the dangerous Scylla, always lose one of their company, which is instantly replaced by the father of the gods, lest the number be impaired; thus one generation of

men imperceptibly makes room for another, and who ever, overpowered by old age or infirmity falls asleep, is said, in the language of poetry, to have been killed by Apollo or Diana with a soothing weapon.

That this was really the way of thinking with the ancients, appears from the manner in which they express themselves. "The small happy island where I was born," relates the swine-herd Eumeus to Ulysses, "is situated beneath a healthy, benevolent sky; there men are not swept away by odious sicknesses, but when old age comes over them, Diana or Apollo appears with silver-bow, and kills them with arrows that give no pain."* And when Ulysses, in the lower world, asks the shade of his mother in what manner she had died, he receives the answer: "Not Diana's soft arrow has killed me, nor has sickness taken me away; but the longing after thee, my son, and my grief for thy fate deprived me of sweet life."†

However, neither Apollo nor Diana has always this pleasing and beneficent appearance. From time to time the god of the silver-bow is seen angry at the inhabitants of the earth, and then "he walks forth like a black cloud, or the dark night itself, and the quiver rings on his back as he is moving on with hasty anger." Then he sends his arrows into the camp of the Greeks, there to produce contagious sicknesses, which "sweep away man by man, and do not suffer the flames of the funeral piles to be extinguished."‡ And in the same manner the wrath of Diana brings destruction upon Acteon, and the children of Niobe.

Nevertheless, serenity, benevolence, and loveliness, constitute the chief character of Apollo, and he whose arrow wounds, heals again. Not only is he himself venerated under the name of the Healing, but he is also the father and teacher of Æsculapius, who is acquainted with the means of soothing every pain, and

* Hom. Od. XV. 402. ss. † Homer Od. XI. 196. ss.
‡ Homer, Il. I. 44. ss.

knows a medicine for every sickness, who by his art can save even from death itself.

With reference to this turn of character, an ancient poet, endeavouring to fill the mind with serenity and joy, suggests the following consolation: "If thou art afflicted now, and mourning, it will not always be thus; for not always does Apollo bend his bow; soon will he awaken again the silent Muse to play and song!"*

In all these fictions the image of Helios is to be recognized: it is the animating sun-beam which awakens the heart to gaiety and song. It is also the all-seeing, the all-discovering sun-beam that assumed a form in the prophesying Apollo as well as in Apollo the herdsmen, for those herds and flocks that graze without herdsmen and shepherds are, as fiction asserts, watched by the all-seeing sun. Yet all these grand features are contracted in the more tender form of that Apollo, whose parents were Jupiter and Latona. He is the shepherd of king Admetus' flocks, he inspires the divining Pythia, and leads the chorusses of the Muses.

On the isle of Delos he awoke to life, and soon after his birth, the divine power that dwelt in him, speedily developed itself. The august goddesses Themis, Rhea, Dione, and Aphrodite, were present when he was born; they wrapped him up in soft habiliments, and Thetis reached him nectar and ambrosia. As soon as he had tasted the divine food, his swathing bands confined him no longer; the divine boy stood on his feet, and even his tongue was loosed: "The golden lyre," cried he, "shall be my joy, the carved bow my pleasure, and in oracles I will reveal the events of futurity."† And when he had thus spoken, now a blooming youth, he walked forth majestically over mountains and islands. He came to Pytho,‡ with its craggy summits, and there

* Horace, Lib. II. Od. X.

† Hymn to Apoll. 120. ss.

‡ Pytho, properly speaking, is the ancient name of the city of Delphi, at the foot of Mount Parnassus, in Phocis; here it signifies the mountain itself.

he arose, swift as thought, into the assembly of the celestials. There, then, at once, reigned lyre and song; the Graces, tenderly embracing their friends and companions, the Horæ, joined with them in the Olympian dance; while the Muses, with harmonious voices, sang the joys of the blessed immortals, and the grief of mortal men, who know no means of escaping old age and death.

When Apollo afterwards descended from the Olympian seat, he killed at the very spot from which his oracles should spread over the earth, the dragon Python, and "the beams of the sun caused the slain monster to decay."* From this deed, Apollo received the surname of the Pythian.† There, in a deep rocky valley of Parnassus, stood the famous temple of Apollo, and over the cleft of a cavern the tripod was placed, on which the priestess sat, through whose mouth the god revealed the future, and who is likewise called Pythia.

Among the poetical fictions of the ancients, that of Apollo is one of the most sublime and lovely, because it dissolves the idea of a destructive power in that of youth and beauty, thus combining in harmonious unity two ideas entirely opposite. It seems to be owing to this circumstance, too, that plastic art, in the most beautiful representation of Apollo,‡ which as a sacred bequest of antiquity, was spared by all-destroying time, has attained to a degree of perfection which comprises in it all that is truly beautiful, the sight of which fills the soul with admiration, because of the harmonious multiplicity which it expresses.

Upon an antique gem, which, in its kind, is considered as a masterpiece of Grecian art, Apollo is represented in the act of turning his lyre over the head of Pythia, who bears the sacrificial cup in her hand, as if inspiring

* Hymn. in Apoll. 371.

† This is the common interpretation: See Hymn to Apoll. ubi sup. Ovid's Metam. I. 447; but the name signifies also the Prophesying.

‡ Apollo Belvedere.

the priestess with the heavenly harmonies that opened to her the times to come. Another representation, also, upon a gem, shows him leaning against an Attic pillar, with the bow in his left hand, and the lyre at his feet. In this image, one may behold the god who from the glittering bow shoots mortal arrows, but who likewise mingles with the chorusses of the Muses, and, by the healing art, renovates the wounded body.

NEPTUNE, POSEIDON.

After the divine forms of Pontus, Oceanus, and Nereus, have retreated into shade, Neptune rises in lordly majesty, holding the mighty trident in his hand, with which he calms the seditious floods, so that the traces of his weapon are to be found in the slight furrows of the tranquil element.

All that moves rapidly onward, affords the ruler of the waves pleasure. On land, he bends from his chariot-seat over his spirited steeds to encourage them; and at sea, the swiftly flying ships are his delight. The race of horses owes to him its existence, for he struck the ground with his trident, and the horse instantly sprang from it. He also is the father of the winged Pegasus, and of Arion, the noblest horse that ever bore kings or heroes. Endowed with the swiftness of the wind, he threw off his rider in the Grecian games, to win the prize for himself.

We see how closely connected in these fictions is the animal world with that of the gods. The animal is considered in them as an emblem of nature, and nature as containing the archetypes of all divine representations. In the Egyptian mythology, all divine beings appear under animal forms, a circumstance which fable explains by saying, that the gods, through fear of the giants or Typhon, had fled into Egypt, there hiding themselves within the bodies of animals.

Though descended from the same father as the

Thunderer, Neptune, like the element in which he reigns, is but the subordinate power. When, during the war with Troy, Iris came to Neptune, delivering to him the threatening message of Jove, that he should beware of measuring himself with him who sways the thunderbolts, and refrain from assisting the sons of Danaus, the Shaker of the earth, at first, replied with boldness: "However mighty Jupiter may be, he has spoken very arrogantly! Are we not all three the sons of Saturnus and Rhea? Is not the universe divided among us? He may terrify with such words his sons and daughters, but not me!" Iris reminded him: "The elder brother is protected by the power of the Erynnies,"—and instantly Neptune complied with the will of the Thunderer, speaking to Iris in mild language: "Thou hast wisely spoken, O goddess; it is well, if a messenger knows also what is useful."*

The archetype of Neptune is the vast sea, which being, as it were, angry at all that is prominent, strives to bring it down to its own level. Thus when, during the siege of Troy, the Greeks were building a wall round their ships, near the sea-shore, to serve as a bulwark against the enemies, Neptune grew angry, and, hastening to Jupiter, gave vent to the bitterness of his soul in these words: "The renown of this wall, will spread all over the earth; yet my own wall, which I, assisted by Apollo, once built round Troy, for king Laomedon, will be forgotten." To which, Jupiter replied: "Illustrious Shaker of the earth! I should not wonder if another god, less powerful than thou, would care for such a work as that: but thy glory reaches already as far as the light of the sun; and thou wilt, I trust, sink that wall into the sea, and cover the shores with sand, that no trace of its existence shall be left, as soon as the Greeks have gone."† With such words,

* Homer Il. XV. 185, ss. † Homer. Il. VII. 546. ss.

Jupiter upbraided Neptune for his envy and care about the work of mortal men.

The productions of Neptune are, for the greater part, monstrous. The Aloides, who, heaping mountains upon one another, attempted to scale the heavens, and became dangerous to Jupiter himself, were his sons, and his son also was the monstrous Cyclop Polyphemus, whom Ulysses deprived of his eye. This injury, done to his beloved son by mortal hands, Neptune left not unavenged, but severely punished the daring deed of Ulysses. He rendered vain, as long as possible, all attempts made by the unfortunate traveller to regain his home; he made him endure all hardships and dangers that can befall a sea-faring man; and when, at last, by the will of fate, he must reach Ithaca, his native island, Neptune avenged himself on the innocent ship of the hospitable Phæacians, who brought him thither, transforming her on her return into a rock. Thus dangerous was it even to Minerva's favourite, to have offended the dreadful power of the resistless element, and what was related to it.

When the Muses were entertaining themselves "on the Aonian mount," with song and play on the lyre, in so gay and cheerful a manner, that all the environs participated of their joy, and Helicon itself leaped under their feet, Neptune, falling into a passion, sent up Pegasus with the injunction to set limits to the mirth and noisy joy of those revellers. When arrived at the top of the mount, Pegasus had nothing to do in order to bring all in its proper, quiet course, but to paw the ground; from beneath his tramp, however, that well known fountain burst forth, out of which the poets sip their inspiration, and which from the horse is called Hippocrene.

During the Trojan war, Neptune was once sitting on a woody mountain-top, in the isle of Samos, and looking from afar at the combat. He was very angry at Jupiter because he suffered the Trojans to be victorious.

Descending from the mountain, which trembled under his feet, he made three steps forward, and with the fourth he was in Aege, where, in the deep of the sea, was his palace. There he mounted his chariot, and drove in so rapid a course over the waves, that the brazen axle of his chariot remained untouched by the water. All the hosts of the sea rose to hail their king, and the waves on both sides of the chariot fell back in awful respect.

In the grim aspect of Neptune, the raging element over which he presides is painted. He is commonly represented, holding in his right hand the trident, and having collected together in his raised left the reins, by which he manages the proud coursers before his chariot, while his garment is waving in the tempest. A beautiful antique gem shows him treading with the whole weight of his power out of the sea upon a rock, bearing the trident on his left shoulder, and holding his right hand carelessly behind his back.

Poetic as well as plastic art does indeed represent the king of the waters in a similar majesty with Jupiter; but still the expression of power and sublimity always appears subordinate in the former. It is not that quiet, eminent power, which commands with the brow of the eye, which clears up the sky with a smile, and which is but seldom prompted to grow angry, because it is in the least degree restrained. On the contrary, with Neptune, the expression of anger and wrath is prevailing. He chides the winds, which, at the instigation of Juno, had ruffled the waves of the sea without his consent; and his expressive, "*Quos ego!*"* with which he threatens and overawes them, has, even in modern times, been frequently recurred to by plastic art, with the view of exhibiting his character in an appropriate representation.

* Virg. Æn. I. 135.

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MINERVA, PALLAS ATHENE.

When the blue-eyed goddess sprang forth in shining armour from Jove's immortal head, Olympus shook, Earth and Sea trembled, and the charioteer of the Sun stopped his snorting steeds, until she took off the divine weapons from her shoulder.*

Not being the offspring of a mother, her bosom was as cold as the steel with which it was covered. Her nature approached to manly greatness, and tenderness and female affection dwelt not in her heart. By this disposition, equally adapted to quiet, unprejudiced musing on art and science, and to undaunted participation in warlike occupations, her two-fold character, as goddess of Wisdom, and as heroine, is at once explained and justified: for in a female being, the want of tender feelings is always connected with a desire of destruction, which grows together with the former, at an equal rapidity. It is the tender-hearted, affectionate Venus, who, merely out of love to Adonis, and not on her own account, pursues with him the roes and fawns of the forest; but the colder Diana delights in chase and destruction itself, only forgetting it for a moment, when, with secret fondness, she steals a look at the slumbering Endymion.

Minerva, the cold virgin, being destitute of every feeling of tenderness and languishing passion, finds her pleasure, like the stern god of battle, in warlike tumult, and delights in the sight of destroyed cities. There is, however, this difference; she, patronizing at the same time the peaceful arts, does not share with him the impetuosity and violence of character by which he is distinguished. Repulsive coldness is the chief feature that characterizes her, and renders her equally capable of being the directress of just wars, and of practising the

* Hymn to Pall. 10.

laborious task of weaving, of inventing useful arts, and guiding the wrathful minds of the heroes. When Achilles was going to draw his sword against Agamemnon, his king and chief, the blue-eyed goddess suddenly stood behind him with terrible look, invisible to every one but himself, seized his yellow hair, and assuaged the wrath of the young hero by prudent advice. He withdrew his mighty fist from the silver handle, and the sword dropped back into its scabbard. Thus Pallas Athene, even in the midst of war, appears as a mediator and peacemaker; nor is she, by any means, to be confounded with wild Bellona, (Enyo,) who, with terrific countenance and dishevelled hair, brandishing a bloody whip in her right hand, while the other shakes the heavy lance, drives the chariot of the god of War. She is a subordinate being, who, even by her appearance and deportment, betrays her inferior standing. In her wild aspect, no quiet look discloses the divine spark of inward wisdom, or inventive genius. Her glaring eye darts rage and fury; her figure is not graced with that nobility of air, in which the just ruler of battles, and the august guide of the heroes, is to be recognized; her headlong impetuosity, her cruel desire of murder and devastation, discovers the worthy companion of Discord, as well as the ferocious driver of the snorting coursers of Mars.

In the divine person of Minerva, warlike disposition was tempered partly by her female sex, yet more so by those qualities which rendered her the benefactress of mankind in bestowing upon them the peaceful arts. For, the same goddess who delighted in the din of battle, and the shouts of fighting heroes, taught mankind the art of weaving, of building ships, and of pressing oil from olives. When she was engaged with Neptune in the dispute after whom that city should be named, than which none more advanced in the arts and sciences has ever adorned the earth, it was agreed, in the council of the gods, that the honour of naming it should be-

long to whichever of the claimants bestowed the most useful present upon the inhabitants. Accordingly, the monarch of the waters called the horse into existence, by striking the earth with his trident; Minerva's gift was the olive tree, and she obtained the prize. The opposition of apparently quite different and incongruous features, in the character of this goddess, is by no means prejudicial to the beauty of her fictitious person. On the contrary, fiction becomes thereby, as it were, a sublimer language, which summons together a number of dispersed ideas into tuneful harmony, as is the case in the representation of Apollo. It is true, that such diversified ideas are seldom united in the microcosm of the thinking mind; yet a single glance into the immense world of nature must convince us, that their prototypes are connected in sisterly union, all apparent differences and contradictions of creation and destruction being dissolved, and life and death combined in the most perfect and beautiful harmony.

Nor can it justly be asserted, that the unity and harmony of the whole in Minerva's character, is disturbed by the seeming contradiction of its single features. They all refer to the cold, reflecting wisdom, which, guarded by the want of feeling, and a sort of forbidding callousness, never hears the voice of passion. The petrifying head of Medusa threatens from the shield that covers Minerva's breast, and over her head hovers the gloomy, melancholy bird of night. She is the faithful friend of the enduring, persevering, cold, and cunning Ulysses, as well as the admonisher who recalls the enraged heroes to presence of mind.

The deep sense which lies concealed in all the fictions of the ancients, betrays itself, also, in Minerva's power being represented as superior to that of Mars. The warlike spirit that keeps possession of itself, that looks with quiet eye over the field of battle, and is sufficiently comprehensive to attend also to the arts and sciences of peace, gets the better of the impetuous one

that is always ready to fight. When, during the war with Troy, the gods themselves had engaged in the combats, either to aid the Greeks, or to assist the Trojans, and had challenged each other, the turbulent god of war, rushing on the more tender Pallas, furiously thrusts his spear against her shield; yet against that even Jupiter's lightnings are of no avail. The goddess, however, falling back a little, takes up with her strong hand an immense field stone, and hurls it upon the forehead of Mars, so that he is precipitated to the earth, covering with his body seven acres of ground.

Notwithstanding the manly, strong features with which the picture of Minerva is drawn by poetry, she continues still a woman that cannot conquer the foibles common to her sex. No sooner had the inventress of the flute made the discovery through the mirror presented by a lucid rivulet, that her charms would suffer a little by playing on this instrument, than she threw it away, to the great misfortune of Marsyas, who found it.* Like Juno, she was jealous, too, and like her, she did not rest until Troy stood in flames, and Priam's race was destroyed, because Paris had denied her, as well as Juno, the prize of beauty, awarding it to the softer charms of Venus.

Minerva, even as goddess of Wisdom, is generally represented in full panoply; a helmet covers her head, in her right hand she holds a spear, and in her left the formidable Ægis, or shield, with the head of Medusa. An owl, the bird sacred to her, is commonly seen hovering over her helmet, or placed near her. In the graceful and majestic countenance of the august goddess of Wisdom, shines forth the inward spirit, genius, and nobility.

* The Satyr Marsyas, a celebrated musician in Phrygia, is said to have challenged Apollo to a trial of skill in music, in which he was vanquished, and flayed alive by the god of the golden harp. Marsyas was changed into a river, which, under the same name, discharges its waters into the Meander. Herod. VII. 26. Diod. Sic. III. Ovid. Fast. VI. 696. Metam. VI. 382.

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MARS, ARES.

Even to the dreadful and terrible, even to destructive war, the imagination of the ancients ascribed personality. Thus they tempered the idea of the wild and impetuous power, that rages like a tempest through the hosts engaged in bloody strife, that breaks helmets, dashes weapons to pieces, and crushes chariots, that throws alike to the ground the valiant and the faint-hearted in the whirling storm of the battle, triumphing over its wasting destruction. The human form, into which this terrible appearance was disguised by imagination, and associated with the assembly of the immortals, presented, moreover, to the warrior a lofty pattern, the majesty of which he partly appropriated to himself by bold and valorous deeds.

That again the human form of Mars is dissolved, from time to time, into the idea of the fighting army itself, lies in the nature of poetical representation. Thus, when in a combat before Troy he was wounded by the valiant Diomedes, aided by Minerva, he roared, as the poet tells us, like ten thousand men in the tumult of the battle, so that fear and terror seized both Greeks and Trojans, on hearing the voice of the brazen god of war. Enveloped in clouds, he immediately ascended to Olympus, and he appeared to Diomedes as nightly gloom, that precedes a tempest. When he arrived at the dwelling of the immortal gods, he complained to Jupiter of the audacity of men; but Jupiter reproved him with angry words: "Trouble me not with thy complaints, inconstant, who art to me the most odious of all the gods that dwell on Olympus, for thou knowest of no other pleasure but strife, war, and contest; in thee dwells the whole character of thy mother, and hadst thou been the son of another god, and not my own, thou wouldst long ago lie deeper than the sons of Uranos."*

* Hom. Il. V. 850, ss.

The inconstancy of Mars, with which he is reproached not only by his father, but also by Minerva, who calls him a deserter that would now side with the one enemy and now with the other, implies again the idea of war itself, represented by poetry as something that exists, as it were, for its own sake; not caring who is the conquered, or who the conqueror, if the bustle and tumult of the battle continue.

Although the violent and inconstant Mars was often reproved and upbraided by the more eminent and powerful, and for this very reason more gentle and meek deities, Minerva and Jupiter, he held his seat among the celestials, and on earth temples and altars were consecrated to him. Indeed, by his youthful impetuosity he even contrived to win the love of tender Venus, who, unmindful of her duty towards her husband, maintained a secret intercourse with the god of war. From this disguised connexion between the tender and the violent, Harmonia arose, who afterwards became the wife of Cadmus, the founder of Thebes.

In the same manner, as Venus binds the impetuous god of war by her tenderness, Minerva, on the other hand, restrains his violence by her wisdom. For, when on a certain occasion Jupiter's threatening injunction prohibited the gods from taking any part in the contests between Greeks and Trojans, and Mars became apprised that in one of their fights his son Ascalaphus had been slain, immediately commanding his servants, Fear and Terror, to put his horses to his chariot, and taking up his glittering arms, he thus addressed the other inhabitants of Olympus: "Be not angry at me, Celestials, because I am going to avenge the death of my beloved son Ascalaphus; my paternal heart will not suffer me to remain tranquil, even if Jupiter should hurl his lightnings upon me." Then Minerva sprang up from her seat, and pulling the brazen spear out of his strong hand, tearing the helmet from his head, and the shield from his shoulder: "Madman," she cried, "wilt thou

bring ruin on us all, if Jove's wrath be excited to the utmost! Refrain from thy anger; for many a one lies slain who was stronger than thy son, and many a one stronger than he will yet fall. Who can save mortals from death?" Thus spoke the goddess of Wisdom, and brought back the furious Mars to his seat.*

Who does not perceive, that through all these human representations of gods, great images and sublime ideas shine, which render the fictions themselves dignified and sublime: wild destruction, tender sublimity, high charms of beauty, and guiding wisdom; these are the ideas which, in various ways, intermingle and hide themselves under the disguise of human forms.

Mars is represented, according to his profession, as a warrior in complete armour, bearing shield and spear. An antique gem, preserved in one of the German museums, shows him as he is descending from the top of the cloud-capt Olympus, supporting himself by his right hand on the cliffs of the mountain, and carrying in his left a buckler and spear.

VENUS, APHRODITE.

In this lovely goddess the charms of beauty are venerated, which allure to matrimonial union, as well as the impulse by which all beings are propagated. It was Venus who, directing the eyes of the gods to the daughters of men, rejoiced in her power and triumphs, until she herself was smitten by the flourishing youth of Anchises, whom she presented with Æneas, the godlike hero.

But as the beneficent impulse of love, if not carefully guarded by reason and morality, may prove pernicious, bringing destruction on the individual man, as well as war and mischief upon whole nations; so the mildest of all goddesses is also represented as a dreadful being.

* Hom. Il. XV. 115, ss.

Venus, having promised Paris the fairest wife upon earth, because he had adjudged the prize of beauty to her, in preference to all other goddesses, incited him to deprive Menelaus, king of Sparta, of his lawful spouse, the godlike Helena, herself instilling into the bosom of this woman inconstancy and unfaithfulness. Thus the goddess of Love kept her word, not caring about the misery and ruin in which it might result. At all times, and in every danger, she proved a zealous friend to Paris. When, during the siege of Troy, the offended husband, Menelaus, was about to kill him in single combat, she suddenly covered him with nighly darkness, leading him safely into his perfumed closet.

Should this deity unite at once in her lovely person the cold wisdom of Minerva, or the awful earnestness of Themis, then, indeed, she would not render herself guilty of the injustice of gratifying the wishes of one favourite at the expense of a whole city, nay, of a whole country laid waste on his account. But then she would likewise cease to be exclusively the goddess of Love; she would not continue any longer to be a product of fancy, representing in her person what in all nature continually operates, not caring whether it leaves behind it the traces of bloody wars, or ages exhibiting the bliss of peace, together with generations rejoicing in their existence.

In the productions of fancy, it is the very want of completeness, the very appearance of defect in the features of the represented persons, by which alone imagination is enabled to create and people a whole world of supernatural beings, distinguished by different characters. The august Juno is destitute of placid loveliness; she is obliged to borrow the girdle of Venus. The mighty god of war is deficient in reflection and prudence; Minerva restrains his impetuosity.

Venus is possessed of the highest charms imaginable; but Minerva, destitute of female delicacy, is far superior to her in power. In one of the battles fought before

Troy, in which the gods themselves at last challenged each other, Venus being on the side of the Trojans, received from the strong hand of Minerva, who assisted the Greeks, such a blow as to make her knees sink under her. "Would to heaven," exclaimed Minerva, triumphantly, "that all the Trojans might equal the heroism and valour of Venus!"* And when, at another time, Venus, wounded in her snow-white hand, by the bold Diomedes, came to Olympus, complaining to her mother Dione of the daring of mortal men, Minerva railed at her, in terms like these: "Venus, forsooth, was persuading a handsomely dressed Grecian lady to follow along with her beloved Trojans, and, in caressing the fondling, she scratched her delicate hand with the golden clasp which fastened the robe of her favourite." Then the father of gods and men smiled, and calling his dejected daughter: "Warlike work, my love," said he, "is not thy business; thy sweet concern it is to prepare the joys of the wedding-feast; the care of war's wild tumult leave to Mars and Minerva!"†

Thus the imagination of the ancients sportively trifles with the deity, whom she created in the very smallest features after the image of man, yet still always choosing such natural prototypes as are both grand and sublime.

When Aphrodite rose from out of the sea, she was received by the Horæ, who dressed her in divine attire, put a golden crown on her immortal head, and adorned her neck, arms, and ears, with golden ornaments. Jupiter gave her the Graces for companions; Cupids attended upon her; and her chariot was drawn by doves. Every stroke in this picture breathes tenderness. Yet the son of the goddess is armed with bow and arrows, thus representing the power of his heavenly mother, the all-subduing deity.

The famous statue of Venus, the beautiful rival-piece of the Belvidere Apollo, is under the name of the

* Homer, Il. XXI. 428, ss. † Homer, Il. V. 421, ss.

Venus de Medicis, sufficiently known by means of pictures as well as descriptions.

DIANA, ARTEMIS.

Three of the divine inhabitants of Olympus are out of the reach of the power of Venus: Minerva, who manages the business of war, and teaches useful arts to mankind; Vesta, who swore by Jupiter's head never to unite with man in marriage; and Diana, with the golden bow, who delights in shadowy woods, and the chase of the swift stag.

As soon as Jupiter, unable to resist his beloved daughter's flattering entreaties, had granted her the sempiternal state of a virgin, she took up bow and quiver, kindled her flambeau at Jupiter's lightnings, and, accompanied by her nymphs, went forth through dark forests and woody mountains. She surpasses in beauty and majesty, and is taller by the head than her companions. Bending the golden bow, she sends forth the fatal shafts on every side; the tops of the mountains tremble, and the forests resound with the panting of the wounded deer.*

Yet, even in the tumult of the chase, the goddess does not forget her divine brother, whom, of all immortals, she loves most. After having enjoyed herself to the full in sylvan sport, she unbends her bow, hastens to Delphi, the residence of the shining Apollo, suspends there her weapon, and leads the chorusses of the Muses and Graces, who chant forth the praise of the heavenly Latona, because she was the mother of such children.

Diana shines brightest as the sister of Apollo, who sheds upon her his own glorious splendour. United with him, she kills the children of Niobe with terrible arrows; in union with him, she directs her soothing weapons against the families of men, who, like withering leaves,

* Hymn to Diana.

are to make room for generations to come. Diana prepared herself for this, by trying her skill first on trees, then on animals, and lastly on a lawless city, annoying its inhabitants with pernicious shafts, that carried sicknesses and plagues along with them.

The archetype of Diana is the shining moon, who, cold and chaste, scatters her modest silver-light over mountain tops and forest glades. The chasteness of Diana, however, is a fearful feature in her character, as witnessed in the fate of Actæon, the hunter, who surprised her when bathing. He fell a victim to her offended virgin modesty, for she changed him into a stag, and suffered his own dogs to rend him. Another example of her severity is afforded by that unfortunate priestess of hers, who profaned her sanctuary by receiving into it the youth whom she loved. The offended goddess punished the whole country with plague and pestilence, until the guilty couple were sacrificed upon her altar. Virgins, making the vow of chastity, devoted themselves to Diana, who with dreadful punishments avenged the violation of this vow. Whenever, therefore, one of those virgins, who, by sacred promises, were devoted priestesses of Diana, changing her resolution, wished to marry, she trembled at the thought of the vengeance of her goddess, and endeavoured to reconcile her by supplications and sacrifices.

During the Trojan war, Diana ventured to challenge the stronger Juno, yet she had soon reason to repent of her forward boldness, when she felt severely the powerful arm of Jupiter's spouse. "The deer on the mountains thou canst kill, but not fight against those who are stronger than thou." Thus saying, Juno, with her left hand laid hold of both hands of Diana, took off with her right the quiver from the shoulder of the poor prisoner, and struck her on both cheeks with it, so that the arrows were scattered upon the ground; and like a timid dove escaping from the claws of a hawk, so fled Diana away, weeping, and leaving her quiver, which, to-

gether with the scattered shafts, was taken up, and restored to her by Latona.*

Although these divine personages act in the manner of human beings, the fiction itself is not destitute of beauty, if viewed, not in its single properties, but as a whole. The same dreadful quiver, from which deadly arrows spread over the race of mortals, is an easy toy in the hand of the august Juno, who uses it as an instrument wherewith to chastise the forward insolence of the less powerful; and the latter, whose flushing cheeks feel, inflicted by a stronger hand, the blows of that quiver, accoutred with which she is accustomed to walk forth in majestic pride, affords a striking picture of female power deeply humbled.

The wiser Apollo, when challenged by Neptune, on the same occasion, returns to his antagonist this answer: "Why should I fight with thee for the sake of miserable mortals, who, like the leaves of the trees, last but a short time, and soon wither away. Let us refrain from fighting; and let them carry on their war among themselves!"†

Upon one of those antique gems which have reached our times, Diana is represented with her garment tucked up, leaning in an easy posture against an attic pillar. Her quiver and bow are suspended from her shoulder, and, as that being who clears up the shades of night, she holds a flambeau in her hand, which she is going to extinguish; behind her a mountain is to be seen, illustrative of her being the goddess who ranges the woody tops, and follows the tracks of the deer.

CERES, DEMETER.

Of the three august daughters of Saturnus and Rhea, Juno alone is the reigning queen of the heavens, while Ceres and Vesta exercise their beneficent influence on

* Hom. Il. XXI. 431, ss. † Hom. Il. XXI. 461, ss.

Moritzis Mythology.

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earth; the one calling forth the nourishing ear of corn, the other impregnating the lap of the earth with sacred, fertilizing warmth.

Ceres was the happy mother of Proserpina, to whom, however, the sweet light of the sun was granted by fate only for a short time, youth and beauty soon becoming in her a prey of inexorable Orcus. Gathering with her companions, in the island of Sicily, the flowers of the meadow in harmless, unconcerned youth, Proserpina was seen by Pluto, and chosen by him for the queen of the shades. The king of terrors seized her with his mighty arms, and, regardless of her feeble struggles, her tears, and lamentations, raised her on his chariot drawn by black horses. Provoked by the daring deed, and pitying the fate of the innocent victim, the nymph Cyane, one of Proserpina's attendants, endeavoured to stop the snorting steeds, but Pluto, thrusting his sceptre into the ground, soon made way for himself; the earth burst asunder, and ingulphed chariot and horses, Proserpina and her ravisher, who carried her safely to his subterranean palace.

When Ceres heard of the loss of her daughter, not knowing who was her ravisher, nor whither she had been carried, she kindled her torch at the flames of Mount Ætna, mounted her chariot, drawn by two dragons, and sought her child all over the earth, even to the most secret corners, where never ray of the sun penetrates the eternal night. After having overrun the whole globe in vain, the disconsolate mother arrived at Eleusis, a village in Attica, where she sat herself mournfully down upon a stone in the street. Here she was seen by Celeus, an inhabitant of the place, and hospitably invited by him to enter his dwelling, though it was a habitation of wo, because a beloved son of his was breathing his last. The goddess, feeling the loss of a beloved child in its whole extent, was moved at beholding the grief of a depressed father, and the tears of a lamenting mother, and resolved on restoring the son of

Celeus to life. She made him healthful, and, with the intention of bestowing also the gift of immortality upon the flourishing boy, she wrapped him in flames every night, to purify him from every mortal particle contained in his body. But the benevolent intention of the divine benefactress was rendered vain by the untimely curiosity of the boy's mother. Desirous to know what the stranger was performing every night, she watched her, and, upon beholding her child in flames, broke forth into loud screams. Thus the work of the goddess was disturbed for ever. Nevertheless, Ceres found means of showing her gratitude and benevolence to the hospitable Celeus in another way. She bestowed on his elder son, Triptolemus, a chariot drawn by two flying dragons, and presented him with the inestimable wheat, that he might spread it all over the earth, and that thus every where a blessing might follow his footsteps. Triptolemus, after having traversed the earth, and taught mankind husbandry, is said to have succeeded his father in the sovereignty of Eleusis, and to have become the high-priest of Ceres.

At last Ceres learned from the all-seeing sun* the abode of her daughter. She hastened to Jupiter, to obtain from him the restoration of her child, of whom she had forcibly been deprived; and the father of the gods consented to Proserpina's return from Orcus, provided her lips were yet untouched by the food used in Pluto's dominions. But alas! Proserpina had not withstood the temptation to taste of that food, and, having thus become the property of Orcus, she had lost all hopes of a permanent return to the higher regions. All that Ceres could obtain was, that her daughter should abide with Pluto but a part of the year, and that during the remainder she should enjoy the blessed light of the sky, and the society of her affectionate mother.

* According to another fable, it was the fountain Arethusa, in Sicily, that informed Ceres of the fate of her daughter. Ovid. Metam. V. 487.

Throughout this attractive fiction, the ideas of the mysterious development of the grain hidden in the lap of the earth, and of the inward secret life of nature, are to be traced. There is no object to be found in nature in which life and death, to appearance, border so near together, as the grain of seed buried in the lap of the earth, and appearing no longer to the eye of man: for, in the very moment that life seems to have entirely ceased, a new existence begins, fuller and richer than the former.

Ceres, who is said to have first bestowed the blessing of grain upon mortal man, is, in the chain of divine beings, that one who, through the medium of her person, carries the blessed influence of the sky down to the dark dominions of Pluto. Pluto, who is also called the Stygian or subterranean Jupiter, married the beautiful daughter of Jupiter Olympius. In this manner, the opposite ideas of life and death being united in the person of Proserpina, she connects with a tender and mysterious band, the high and the deep, Olympus and Orcus.

Upon ancient marble-coffins, the representation of Proserpina's ravishment is often to be met with; and it seems as though, in the mysterious festivals which were celebrated in honour of Ceres and her daughter, the close connexion of the terrible and beautiful had been intended, to fill the souls of the initiated with astonishment and awe; when at last, all that appeared in the beginning opposite and contrary, melted away and was lost in harmony.

Although Ceres is one of the most placid and meek among the divine beings, yet she made Erisichthon, who had violated one of her devoted groves, sensible of her dreadful power. He was warned by the goddess herself, when going to cut down a sacred poplar; but, carrying on the cruel stroke, without paying any regard to the warning voice, he atoned for his crime by feeling a continual hunger, which he was never able to satisfy. At another time, when on her journey in search of her

daughter, tired and languishing, she entered a cottage to slake her burning thirst, and was scoffed at by a rude boy, because of her eagerness in drinking; not bearing the ignominy, she bespattered the offender with water, by which he was immediately transformed into a spotted lizard, bearing witness, in this shape, to the formidable power of the goddess.

Ceres is commonly represented holding a sickle in her right hand, and in her left, that torch which she lighted at the fire of Mount Ætna, when going to look for her lost daughter in the most secret corners of the earth. At her feet the two dragons that drew her chariot are coiling themselves. A wreath of wheaten ears confines her golden tresses; and a cornucopia is generally placed near her, to indicate the plenty which agriculture produces.

VULCAN, HEPHÆSTOS.

Painful and wearisome labour in a work-shop filled with steam and smoke, joined to the idea of sublime art, that works there indefatigably with productive genius, was by the imagination of the ancients, wrought up into a particular divine being, whose entire strength concentrated itself in the mighty arm that managed the weighty hammer upon the anvil, while the lamed feet were enfeebled and tottering.

Not to be outdone by Jupiter, who of himself had given birth to Minerva, Juno, of her own accord, brought forth Vulcan. But the former, not willing to admit the hideous creature to the splendid assembly of the gods, hurled him from Olympus down to the earth.* Smoke and black steam, together with half smothered flame, do not agree with pure æther; it is in contradiction to the idea of serenity, beauty, and divine dignity.

* According to Homer, he was hurled from Olympus, because he took part in the quarrels between Jupiter and Juno, in which he attempted to assist the latter. Il. I. 590. In the Hymn to Apollo, Juno relates that she herself precipitated him into the sea. 318.

Nevertheless, fancy contrived to usher even this personage into the splendid theatre of high, divine Olympus, securing to him a place among the celestials, by bestowing on him the comical part in the heavenly stage. The blessed gods raise peals of laughter, when they behold limping Vulcan in the place of Ganymedes, making the round in the assembly of the immortals, reaching them the nectar-cup, and jesting himself at his bodily defects and deformity.

Yet the bold imagination of the ancients, which we cannot forbear admiring, on the other hand found means to shroud again this comical turn of character in divine power and sublimity, by connecting with it a dignity superior to every thing human. Her grand picture of the supernatural world, far from being degraded by a figure like Vulcan's, becomes, on the contrary, more variously shaded, and gains new charms. The halting son of Juno, who, on account of his deformity, was thrown from Olympus, and, after his re-admission into the community of the gods, ministered the nectar-cup in place of the graceful Ganymedes in so awkward and unwieldy a manner, as to excite the shouting laughter of the blessed immortals; the same Vulcan is the inimitable artist, with whose assistance even the immortals cannot dispense. At his work-bench the limping feet are not prejudicial to him; he needs only his arms. And with strong arm, indeed, manages he the hammer in his smithery; air and fire are at his command; at his nod the bellows blow and kindle the flames, producing a greater or gentler heat, according to his wants; every one of his ideas is instantaneously carried into effect with divine genius, and from beneath his artful hands the work springs forth majestically. It is also an easy matter to him to infuse life and motion into his creations. He forges twenty tripods rolling upon wheels, which, at his command, enter the assembly of the gods, and return to him. He has formed for himself, female servants of gold, that sup-

port him when he is walking. When he leaves his smithery, he arrays himself in royal attire, and bears a sceptre.

Though himself a deformed cripple, he has the most beautiful being that dwells on Olympus for his wife. Thus, plastic art, although in its appearance poor and uncomely, is, in the person of Vulcan, married to beauty itself. By this marriage between the god of fire and Venus, the comical turn of his character gains, moreover, the highest charm, the conjugal unanimity of the divine couple being disturbed by Vulcan's jealousy, a jealousy which indeed rests upon good ground. The story of the artificial net, which the offended husband contrived to throw over Mars and Venus, while he called together all the celestials, to show them the disgraceful spectacle, and to complain of his misfortune, is, in ancient poetry, a source of amusement, both among gods and men.

Especially in the person of Vulcan, do we find that endeavour to unite opposite and seemingly contradictory features into one character, which is peculiar to the fictions of the ancients. With regard to what is external, he, the ugliest of all celestials, is married to the loveliest being that fancy ever created; in his character, the ridiculous is united with dignity; and in his body feebleness is connected with strength, the strong and skilful arms compensating for the limping feet. We are by no means to consider this apparent inconsistency in the poetical productions of the ancients as a defect, originating, perhaps, in the heedless play of humour; on the contrary, we are rather to admire the boldness and ingenuity of an imagination that shrinks not from seeming difficulties, and succeeds in adjusting the variety of materials, collected together for the picture of her celestial world, into so happy and concordant a composition.

The fiction of Vulcan shows us, also, the high estimation in which the ancients held the art of working in metals; it is, of all the arts, the peculiar business of a god.

Although Vulcan first appears in a clear and distinct form among the modern gods, yet his person may be faintly recognised through the clouds in which the ancient deities are shrouded. The Curetes, or Corybantes, who watched Jupiter in the island of Crete, when a child, were, according to an old tradition, his descendants. He was likewise one of the most ancient Egyptian deities, or perhaps the most ancient of them. The Curetes made a noise with their weapons, which, as tradition relates, were of iron. The Cyclops, before the beginning of Jupiter's reign, had prepared thunder and lightning in the caverns of the earth, and Earth herself had already forged that sickle with which Saturnus was maimed. According to another tradition, the Cabiri, a kind of mysterious beings, who, in the remotest times of antiquity, were venerated in Egypt and Samothrace, were sons or descendants of Vulcan. His person itself, however, is always hidden in darkness.

It is a fine and significant intimation, that mythology represents the divine artists as assisting each other. When Prometheus was occupied with forming his men, both Minerva and Vulcan lent him their aid; and when the latter was afterwards, at Jupiter's command, obliged to fasten the father of mankind to the fatal rock, he, not daring to resist the will of the Thunderer, complied with it amid tears and loud lamentations.

Vulcan, the male artist among the celestials, had a desire to marry Minerva, the female one, but she withstood all his entreaties, as well as threats. His son Erichthonius, the earth-born, however, is said to have always been a favourite with Minerva. She appointed him king of her beloved city of Athens, where the desire of hiding his misshapen feet, both of which were those of a dragon,* led him to the invention of the covered, four-wheeled carriage.

* It is worthy of observation, that, in the mythological fictions of the ancients, to almost every being sprung from the earth, or related to it, dragon form or dragon feet are ascribed.

Entirely human is the god of fire represented by Homer, on occasion of Thetis' coming to his dwelling to see him and his wife, and to order, at the same time, a new armour and shield for her son Achilles. No sooner had he heard of the presence of the august Thetis, the old friend of his house, than, in order to appear with proper decency in the presence of the goddess, before he left his work-shop he washed his breast, neck, face, and hands, with a wet sponge, lest his visitor should be offended at beholding him covered with dust, to which his occupation necessarily exposed him.

In the Trojan war, Vulcan, at the command of his mother, opposed himself, with his flames, to the river-god, Scamander, who, with swelling floods, pursued Achilles, and a terrible fight took place betwixt the two opposed elements. Vulcan, after having scorched the shores of the river, and consumed the slain bodies that were lying there, turned his high-flaring flames, with their hissing tongues, against the rising waters themselves, so as to burn their lotus, together with their reeds and rushes, to make the water boil, and to strike anguish and terror into the fishes. Then the afflicted river-god besought Juno to have mercy on him, and she bade Vulcan cease tormenting the suppliant: "Have done, it is not meet that an immortal god should be thus distressed for the sake of mortal men."*

Upon antique gems, Vulcan is commonly represented as an artist, occupied in his work-shop with forging arrows for Cupid.

VESTA, HESTIA.

As Vulcan signifies the destructive and consuming fire, which must needs destroy and melt in order to form again, so Vesta's sublime archetype is the sacred flame of life in nature, which *invisibly* pervades all beings.

* Homer, Il. XXI. 379, ss.

Moritz's Mythology.

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And as an emblem of this animating and life-nourishing fire of nature, as well as of the pure flame that quickens the chaste bosom of the august goddess, a fire burned upon Vesta's altar, which, if once extinguished, was not permitted to be rekindled, save by an electric spark, elicited by friction.

The very ancient worship of Vesta, spreading its influence likewise over domestic life, contributed to render it pure and happy. Vesta, with the ancients, was the genius of their fire-side. Every beneficial influence of the fire, that tends towards physical preservation or moral improvement, was her gift. She was the beneficent being that first taught men to assemble around the sacred hearth, and on it to prepare for themselves the nourishing food. And as the surrounding All of nature itself, which she animated with tender glow, was, as it were, her temple, so Vesta caused man to surround himself, together with his hearth, by a covering for shelter, teaching him to build a house, wherein to secure himself, with his family, against the severe influence of the elements, and to dwell with them in familiar union. For this reason, too, the entrance and vestibule of every dwelling were sacred to Vesta.

It was a pure, grateful feeling, which led the ancients to acknowledge every single benefit of nature, by itself, under some significant emblem; it was especially a beautiful idea to cherish, and again to foster, as it were, that sacred flame which serves man so beneficently, and to devote to its continual service immaculate virgins, as the most sacred priestesses. Thus a particular place of refuge was appointed to that element, which is so useful to man, and so requisite, where it never was employed for human necessity, but always burnt for its own sake, attracting the veneration of mortals.

Whenever ancient art ventured to represent Vesta, the goddess bore a flambeau in her hand; but a mysterious veil is always spread over her chaste form. An

antique gem, preserved in a German museum, contains so complicated and mysterious a group, of which Vesta makes a component part, as to show clearly that the artist had no other view than to intimate the mystery with which the goddess is covered. Pluto, or as he is likewise called, Jupiter Serapis, sitting on a throne, holds in his left hand a sceptre, and with his right strokes the triple-headed Cerberus. On his left side, Harpocrates, the god of silence, is standing, having his finger placed upon his lips, and at his right the veiled Vesta, with the torch in her hand. Harpocrates carries a cornucopia. These are altogether emblems of the innermost, concealed, mysterious part of nature, from which life and fulness continually flow.

Vesta, represented with the torch, is sometimes thought to be the ancient Vesta, who probably was one and the same person with Earth; but the resembling ancient and modern deities lose themselves in one another in the fictions of the ancients; and since Earth, one of the pristine divine beings, does not make her appearance any longer among the modern, she seems to be renewed in Vesta, as Helios is in Apollo.

Vesta and Mercury are intimate friends; they are both beneficent teachers and helpers of men, in whose songs their praises are united. Vesta has her own seat, and enjoys her old honours alike in the houses and palaces of mortals and immortals; to her the first libation of sweet wine is made at the beginning of every repast, and, at the close, she receives the last. And the son of Maia, the bestower of many good gifts, with Vesta, dwells in the houses of men, to whom they both in friendly concord teach useful arts.*

MERCURY, HERMES.

In this light, airy representation, the imagination of the ancients enclosed the ideas of quick inventive facul-

*Hymn to Vesta and Mercury.

ty and cunning activity, which displayed itself alike in deceptive persuasion, and easily accomplished sportive theft, at which even the pilfered himself, learning the adventurous waggishness, was forced to smile.

Jocularity and cunning, being here clothed with divinity and immortality, present a new figure in the great picture of a divine assembly, fitter, upon the whole, to charm our eyes by its variety of composition and splendid colours, than to improve our hearts by its moral exhibitions.

In the human breast, the voice of an invisible supernatural power speaks intelligibly, bidding man lift up his eyes from earth to a higher world. The ancients, too, heard this voice, but misapprehending it, they formed to themselves a supernatural world, after the pattern which nature and human life presented to them. Therefore, nothing appeared to them mean or unholy that rose from the general creating influence of nature, and contained, although noxious in itself, the germ of beauty or utility.

Fancy assigns to her divine beings no bounds with regard to their actions; on the contrary, she gives to the inward impulse of every one of them the fullest scope, suffering them to stray even to the extreme limits of mischief, because in her fictions the great contrasts of nature, together with the huge masses of light and shade, which otherwise we perceive merely as scattered and single, are contracted into a small compass, and because every one of her beings comprises, as it were, in its own person, the substance of all things, considered from some sublime point of view.

In this respect, the fiction of Mercury is one of the most beautiful and comprehensive. He is the swift herald of the immortals; the god of speech; the tutelary genius of the roads; in him the winged word is renewed when repeated from his lips, in delivering the commands of the gods; with his golden wand he leads the dead to the world of shadows; but he is like-

wise the author of all prudent and cunning designs, plots, and artifices, the patron of thieves, and presides over trade and gain.

His archetype is speech. Speech, the tender breath of air, must, as it were, steal into the effective connexion of things, in order to make up, by thought and prudence, for the deficiency of power and strength. The word of speech is winged, because it is only to be heard when accompanied by the swift breath of the lungs, and is left to fly like a bird that cannot be recalled. For this reason, the beautiful expression of the ancients, whenever the sound did not pass the lips, was this: "The word wants its wings."

The tongues of victims were devoted to Mercury, and milk and honey offered to the god of sweet persuasion. According to a poetical representation, a golden chain hangs down from his mouth, reaching from Olympus to the listening ears of the dwellers on the earth, who, in this manner, are persuaded by the irresistible charms of the sweet melody that flows from his lips.

Irresistible, also, is his art to settle differences, to reconcile enemies, in short, to dissolve all dissonant objects in harmonious union. Once, in his boyhood, he found two serpents in his way, engaged in furious strife; he struck between them with his golden wand, and, behold! the reptiles instantly forgot their fury, and twisted themselves in gentle coils round the wand, at the top of which their heads met in eternal concord. There is no emblem to be found more expressive of reconciliation and peace, as well as harmonious connexion of what is opposed and contending, than this wand surrounded with the coiling serpents, which in the hand of the divine herald thenceforward constituted a token of his authority.

Nothing is more charming and attractive in the fictions of the ancients, than the description of the rapid development of the divine power in their supernatural

beings, a power, which, as if having existed long ago, and being only new-born in a particular form, does not suffer itself to be restrained for a long time by swathing clothes and cradle.

While Juno was sleeping, Jupiter went to see Maia, the graceful daughter of Atlas, in a shady cave, and to their secret intercourse, Mercury owed his existence. Being born in the morning, he at noon played on the lute invented by himself; and in the evening he stole Apollo's oxen.

The lute was invented by him in the following manner. Secretly leaving his cradle at noon, on the first day of his life, upon his stepping over the threshold, he met a tortoise, whose shell appeared to him a fit instrument for giving musical tones, when furnished with strings: "Now thou art dumb, but after thy death thy song will be heard." Thus addressing the animal, he immediately killed it, and furnished the shell with seven concordant strings, which he touched with a small stick. As soon as he had tuned the newly invented instrument with skilful ear, he could not forbear singing to it, and he chanted forth at first the praise of every thing that met his eye, even the tripods and vessels in his mother's house, till at last his song, passing into a higher strain, found a worthier subject in the love of Jupiter and Maia, his divine parents.

When evening was coming on, and the sun descended into the ocean, Mercury found himself upon the Pierian mountains,* where the herds of the immortal gods were feeding. From these he stole fifty oxen belonging to Apollo, and devising many a crafty trick to avoid detection, as he drove them onward over mountains and through valleys, he would have escaped discovery but for an old man, who, digging in the field, saw the boy with the oxen, and afterwards betrayed him to Apollo. On the shores of the river Alpheus,

* Pierus, a mountain in Thessaly, sacred to the muses.

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Mercury killed two of the stolen oxen, making a sacrifice of them to himself. Having done this, he carefully extinguished the fire, hid the ashes in the ground, and threw the remainder of the killed animals into the river, together with the shoes he had made of twigs and put on the feet of the oxen, in order to render their tracks indiscernible. All this he performed by moon-light. Before the break of day he gently stole back into his mother's dwelling, and lay down again in his cradle, pulling the clothes around him, and holding the lute, his dearest play-thing, in his hand.

And when Apollo, angry at the theft committed on his oxen, now appeared to call Mercury to account, and to regain his property, the little thief feigned a deep sleep, having the lute lying under his arm. Apollo threatened to precipitate him into Tartarus, if he would not immediately point out the place where the oxen were hidden. Then the cunning boy, twinkling his eyes, answered him, "how cruelly, son of Latona, dost thou address a little boy, who was not born until yesterday, and who cares for very different things than driving away oxen; who is longing for sweet slumber and his mother's breast, and whose feet are too tender and feeble to tread long and rough paths. Nay, I will swear by Jupiter, my father's head, that neither I myself have stolen the oxen, nor do I know who committed the deed."

Upon this, it was agreed between them, that they should both appear before the father of the gods on Olympus, that he might reconcile their difference. Apollo stated his complaint, while Mercury stood by in his swathing-clothes, in order to refute the charge by his tender age. "Have I then, indeed," said he to Jupiter, "the appearance of a strong man, able to drive away oxen? Certainly, father, thou shalt hear nothing but truth from me. Whilst the oxen were stolen, I was lying in sweet slumber, and did not pass the threshold

of my mother's dwelling. Thou thyself knowest well, too, that I am innocent, yet I am ready to protest my innocence with a solemn oath; and I shall one day reward the cruel word of that false one. But thou, father, be the protector of the younger." Thus spoke Mercury, with twinkling eyes, and Jupiter smiled at the boy, because he was prudent enough to deny so finely the charge brought against him. But at the same time, he commanded him to tell where the oxen were hidden, and when Mercury obeyed the injunction, accompanying Apollo to the hiding place, a reconciliation took place between them, of which the invented lute was the pledge.

For when the sweet sound of that instrument had touched the ear of the god of harmony, he was enraptured, and caressing the inventor, "truly," said he, "this invention is worth fifty oxen!" Upon this, Mercury made him a present of the lute, and Apollo became transported with joy, at the thought of possessing so inestimable a treasure. In order, however, to secure it to himself, he requested Mercury to swear by Styx, never to steal the sweetly sounding lute from its present possessor. Apollo gave him in return the golden wand, which had the power of settling all differences; and these two, now closely associated, ascended together, hand in hand, to Olympus. It was art that had woven the band which united them, and Jupiter rejoiced in their concord.*

Mercury became afterwards the messenger of the immortals. He is the swift, the rapidly moving power among the celestials, who, as if firmly established in their majesty themselves, send the fleet inventive idea from heaven to earth, readmitting it into their divine council as soon as its task is accomplished.

Mercury is likewise the teacher of men in the art of wrestling, of conquering strength by agility.

* Comp. Hymn to Merc.

An ancient gem contains the following accurate representation of him. He, as the god of the roads, is standing before an altar, over which rises an antique mile-stone, which he touches with his wand. Upon the altar lies a staff, as an intimation of the travellers' devoting their walking staves to Mercury, after having accomplished their journey. As a sign of the safety of the roads, the peaceful olive-branch is twisted around the mile-stone. The god bears on his head the winged hat; the winged sandals are not fastened to his feet, because he is standing, and not walking through the air.

CYBELE.

In this foreign deity, (for she is of Phrygian origin,) the fiction of Terra is renewed, who was the mother of all creatures. The archetype of Cybele was likewise the great productive power, that gives rise to all formations on earth. She was conceived to be the ruler of the elements, the beginning of all times, the highest goddess of the heavens, as well as the queen of the lower world, and even the representative of every deity; keeping the female character, because of her ever producing power.

Although this goddess is represented sitting in a chariot drawn by lions, and bearing a mural, or tower-crown on her head, to indicate her all-subduing power, together with her sovereignty of the earth overspread with cities; yet this representation is but an external cover for her incomprehensible formless nature, which appeared to the ancients most venerable in this very formless character. In the temple of the great mother of life, at Pessinus, in Galatia, it was a small stone, of a blackish colour, and a rough, pointed outside, with which the idea of any regular form could be least connected, that was to represent the alma mater. It was the idea of this mysterious being, too, which was hidden in the

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person of the Egyptian Isis, whose temple bore the inscription: "I am all that is, that was, and that will be, and no mortal has lifted my veil."

In the same degree as Cybele herself was venerated, her priests were for the most part despised and detested. Their voluptuousness and bestial sensuality, were notorious through all antiquity, so that their own goddess was said to have taken a terrible vengeance on them, for approaching herself too nearly. She drove them distracted, and in their frenzy they scourged, lacerated, and maimed themselves. Thus they ran about in wild ecstasy, while the goddess looked triumphantly at the troop of unmanned, despicable wretches in her train. The frantic fury of her priests was not prejudicial to her veneration: the idea of her always preserved, notwithstanding the abuse of authority, its original sublimity, comprehending in it the all-producing, all-fertilizing, all-animating mother of Nature.

Cybele is generally represented in works of art, either as sitting in a chariot drawn by lions, or as riding upon a lion, and holding a timbrel near her head, as if listening to its noise.

BACCHUS, DIONYSOS.

Bacchus and Hercules, although born of mortal mothers, are associated with the assembly of the immortal gods. Yet Bacchus is by far the higher, the divine person. In him, from the beginning, the plenitude of his being is revealed, and he, from his very birth, takes his seat among the celestials; while Hercules, by bold deeds and invincible valour, must prepare for himself the path to immortality. For this reason, too, the latter, during his lifetime, was ranked only among the godlike heroes, while Bacchus was always entitled to the society of the gods themselves.

The archetype of Bacchus was the inward, swelling fulness of nature, of which, from her foaming cup, she

bestows animating enjoyment among her initiated. The worship of Bacchus, therefore, was, like that of Ceres, mysterious, for both deities are emblems of the whole of nature, which no mortal eye penetrates.

The fiction of Bacchus' birth contains a deep sense. The jealous Juno induced the daughter of Cadmus to harbour the extravagant wish of enjoying the presence of Jupiter in his divine character. Semele, accordingly, first desired the Thunderer to swear that he would comply with the request she was going to make to him, and when he had sworn she demanded that he would appear to her in his true, divine person. Jupiter, not daring to break the terrible oath by Styx, was compelled to approach her with thunder and lightning, and the wretched Semele, slain by the thunder and consumed by the flames, fell a sacrifice to her rash wish. Jupiter snatched from her his son Bacchus, of whom she was pregnant, and placed him in his thigh, where he remained until the regular time of his birth was at hand. Mortality is destroyed, ere immortality rises. Man, during his lifetime on earth, not being able to bear the glory of divinity, is annihilated by its terrible majesty.

After Bacchus was born, Mercury carried him to the nymphs, who were to take charge of his education, and by whom he was nurtured with the greatest tenderness. Every island, and every mainland, contends for the preference of having fostered in its lap the beneficent god, who taught mankind the cultivation of the vine.

In his boyhood, Bacchus, as if yet half reeling in sweet slumber, does not comprehend the whole fulness of his being, and appears apprehensive of injuries inflicted by men, until at once his formidable power reveals itself through miraculous events. Lycurgus, king of the Edones, a people of Thrace, surprised on mount Nysa the nurses of Bacchus, and wounded several of them with his hatchet. The terrified Bacchus threw himself into the sea, where Thetis took him up in her arms.

Lycurgus was punished for his crime with blindness, and, being odious to the immortals, he did not live long.

At another time, a body of pirates, who took him for the son of a king, in the hope of getting a great ransom, carried him off, and brought him on board their ship. No sooner, however, had they left the shore, than the ties with which the smiling boy was fastened, fell off, a fragrant stream of wine ran through the ship; then suddenly a vine rose up to her top-sail, which expanded its branches, loaded with heavy grapes, all over the ship; the mast became entwined with dark ivy, and all the oars were covered with garlands of vine leaves. But on the deck of the vessel a terrible lion made his appearance, casting around him fierce, threatening glances; anguish and unspeakable terror seized the offenders at the horrible sight. Down from the ship they leaped into the raging sea, where, suddenly appearing as swimming dolphins, they bore witness to the power of the all-conquering deity.

Pentheus, a king of Thebes, and, like Bacchus, a descendant of Cadmus, who contemptuously opposed the worship of the new deity, to whom the whole people consecrated altars, was forced, like the criminals on board the ship, to feel the terrible power of the god of wine. Under the form of a youth belonging to the retinue of Bacchus, the god himself appeared before the king, warning him by relating the fate that befel the offenders, who had intended to ravish the planter of the vine. Pentheus, upon this, became still more enraged. He ordered the supposed youth to be thrown into a dungeon, and the most cruel instruments of torture to be brought, in order to put him to death. But when these orders were about to be carried into execution, the god shook off his fetters, the dungeon tumbled down in ruins, burying those who were come to put the prisoner to death, without hurting himself; and Pentheus, persecuting on mount Cythæron, in frantic fury, the priestesses of Bacchus, was, by his own mother

and sisters, who, in their wild frenzy, took him for a lion, torn to pieces, and his head carried about in triumph.

The expedition of Bacchus to India, is a beautiful and sublime fiction. With an army of both men and women, who went on in a joyful tumult, he extended his beneficent conquests far as the Ganges, teaching the conquered nations the cultivation of the vine, together with a higher enjoyment of life, and giving them laws. In the divine person of Bacchus, men revered the more cheerful delights of life, as a particular, sublime being, who, under the form of an eternally flourishing youth, subdues lions and tigers, that draw his chariot, and who, in divine ecstasy, accompanied by the sound of flutes and timbrels, proceeds in triumph, from east to west, through all countries.

This victorious expedition, undertaken for the benefit of the nations on earth, was accomplished by Bacchus in three years, for which reason the festivals* afterward instituted in remembrance of it, were always celebrated after an interval of three years. Then the joyful tumult which accompanied the march of the god through the earth was repeated, and echoed anew from every hill and every mountain. The priestesses of the god of wine, roaming with dishevelled hair upon the mountains, filled the air with noise, proceeding from the beating of timbrels, playing on flutes, and the wild continual cry, Evöe Bacchus! The threatening thyrsust in their hands, from which the coloured ribands waved, while the pine apple on its top concealed the wounding point, is an emblem of the expedition to India, on occasion of which the clamour of war, and din of battle, was hidden under song, and playing on flutes.

These inspired priestesses of Bacchus afforded a sublime subject to ancient poetry. A Bacchante, in her ec-

* They are known under the name of Dionysia, or Bacchanalian Festivals.

† The thyrsus was a dart, or small spear, entwined with ivy, or the vine leaves, borne by the devotees of Bacchus.

stasy, was as if raised above the bounds of humanity. Inspired by the power of the deity, the boundaries of human life were too narrow for her. Thus an ancient poet describes such an inspired personage, as on the top of a mountain, which she had unconsciously ascended; she suddenly awakes from her mental slumber, and beholds beneath her the river Hebrus, and all Thrace, covered with snow. "The danger is sweet, thus to follow the god whose temples are encircled with verdant leaves." The very straining of all the powers, thus climbing up a steep mountain, in wild inspiration, is what renders this picture so beautiful.

Even old age is to be seen in Bacchus' retinue, intoxicated by the sweet juice of the grape, and staggering about with uncertain step. The most conspicuous figure in the train, however, is old Silenus, riding, with heavy head, on his ass, supported by Satyrs and Fauns, and making, in this state, the most charming contrast in the youthful picture. Notwithstanding the ridicule which, in this manner, is brought upon the person of Silenus, he is often represented in the fictions of the ancients as a being of high mental powers. A profound knowledge of divine things is ascribed to him, and his very drunkenness is emblematically interpreted by the giddiness into which profound meditation on the most sublime subjects has thrown him, and not the immoderate use of the sweet juice of the grape. He was also associated with the wise centaur Chiron, as the tutor of young Bacchus.

Two youthful shepherds, finding Silenus sleeping through intoxication, bound him, in order that the god, whom mortals could fetter in his sleep, might ransom himself by granting some request, while the nymph Ægle painted his cheeks with the red juice of berries. When old Silenus awoke, the swains promised him his liberty, on condition that he would give them a lay; he acquiesced. Profound wisdom flowed from those lips, which were commonly wet with the nectar drink that the vine

yields. He chants forth the origin of things, and their miraculous change. The swains listen with rapture to his song, which equals their highest wishes.* This charming fiction shows, also, how artfully the ancients knew how to veil the ridiculous itself with dignity, and always to find out that point, which seems to us to be lost—the point where smiling sport and heavenly sublimity unite. At Elis, in Greece, Silenus had a temple of his own, and was worshipped as a higher being.

The wantonly smiling Fauns, and the sarcastic Satyrs, also belonged to the train of Bacchus, with which, in general, all those beings were connected, who, endowed with youthful wantonness and cheerful levity, were, by a higher nature, elevated above the cares and duties of mortals, and thus neither forced by human necessities, nor moral obligations, to keep within the bounds of moderation. Bacchus, with his train, was, with the ancients, the emblem of the most cheerful enjoyment; and as such they must consider it as absolute, and without restrictions, comprising all that, if found in reality, would destroy mankind.

The same ancient poet, therefore, who, in enthusiastic strains, sings the praise of Bacchus, cautions those who are drinking the cup which the god yields, to refrain from bloody quarrels; citing as a warning example the affray betwen the Centaurs and Lapithæ, who, heated with wine, forgot the hospitable repast, and, with blood-thirsty desire, in furious tumult, assailed one another, till the ground was covered with the bodies of the slain. Notwithstanding the threatening dangers, arising from the homage paid to the god of wine, with the ancients, sensual pleasure, and even wild debauchery, were numbered in the general computation of things, and by no means excluded from the feasts of their gods. With them, life was considered as a tree full of sap, which, unrestrained. shot out in exuberant twigs and

* Virg. Ecl. VI.

branches, without being disfigured, as they thought, by its luxuriant excrescences.

In this light, too, the festivals of Bacchus must be viewed. Since it was the intention of the ancients, by the loud and cheerful train of Bacchus, to represent the utmost degree of joy and pleasure, a moderate Bacchanalian festival would be no Bacchanalian festival at all, as a placid and affectionate Juno would cease to be a Juno, and an honest Mercury would no longer be a Mercury. Indeed, if one should attempt to divest a Bacchanalian feast of revelry and extravagance, it would immediately cease, also, to be an object for art; for the very wildness, the roving about with reeling steps, the flourishing of the thyrsus, and the licentiousness of the Bacchantes, are the traits which alone can render such a picture interesting to the artist.

In the divine form of the eternally youthful Bacchus, similar beings, veiled by gray antiquity in mysterious fables, are renewed. Upon ancient monuments we yet not unfrequently meet with an Indian, as well as an Egyptian Bacchus, both of whom are represented with beards, and not in youthful forms.

The golden horns upon the head of Bacchus, which, by the plastic art of the Greeks, were either hidden entirely, or, at least, but little shown, are a token of the high antiquity of this god, such horns having been connected, in the remotest times, with the ideas of inward divine power.

Among the animals, the spotted panther is sacred to Bacchus; fierceness, nay, even cruelty, is tamed by him, and cringes at his feet. The ever verdant ivy, the snake, which, stripping off its skin, renews itself, are pleasing emblems of never withering youth, in which the divine form of Bacchus resembles that of Apollo, only with this difference, that the former is commonly represented as more tender and feminine.

A beautiful antique gem shows the god of wine sitting on a chariot drawn by two panthers, on which

two cupids are riding, one of whom is playing on a flute.

Another gem contains the representation of Silenus, holding in his right hand a sickle, and resting with his left arm on a lyre. It is an emblem of ecstasy, overflowing in harmonious lays.

THE SACRED ABODES OF THE GODS AMONG MEN.

The imagination of the ancients made her fictions, which, for the most part, are hovering as it were over reality, descend by degrees from the heavens to the earth. She hallowed the spots where, according to the traditions of old, a divine being, new-born, first stood forth in youthful splendour, or where a mainland, or an isle, was so favoured as to foster a divine child in its lap. She likewise consecrated those places where a deity revealed her presence by oracles; and every such place, which a divine being had chosen for his favourite residence, became, in poetical language, a sacred name, with which the idea of the god or goddess was connected, who, under some peculiar, significant form, was there worshipped. And thus imagination found as many resting places as there were temples consecrated by men to beings who, throned above the skies, often came down to abide with them for a time, and, with tender care, to take part in their concerns.

CRETE.

On this island rested, from some unknown cause, the bold fiction, according to which Jupiter, the highest of all immortals, cried on mount Ida with the voice of the new-born infant, longing for food and attention.

In a grotto called the Dictean, the divine child was born. Bees, attracted by the noise which the Cory-

bantes made with their weapons, swarmed around the cradle of the infant, feeding him with honey, and doves came from over the sea, to bring him ambrosia in their bills, while the goat Amalthea suckled him with her milk. And from this mount, where he was fostered when a child, Jupiter was named the Idean. It is not to be confounded with another mount Ida, near Troy, on the highest summit of which, called Gargaros, Jupiter sits, looking over the ground where the Trojans and Greeks fought their destructive battles; and weighing in the formidable scales to each of both armies, by turns, victory or defeat.

DODONA.

In the forest of Dodona, situated in the country of Epirus, or, as it was formerly called, Chaonia, where the most ancient inhabitants of the earth are said to have lived and fed on acorns, was an oracle of Jupiter, which, in point of time, was the first in Greece.

From Thebes, in Egypt, as tradition relates, two doves, sacred to Jupiter, escaped, and took their course, the one to Lybia, and the other to Greece. The latter chose the forest of Dodona for her resting-place, where she revealed the designs of Jupiter to mankind. The image of the speaking dove represents the presaging priestess herself, who first came over from Egypt, bidding thoughtless men listen to the rustling of a sacred oak which she pointed out, to the various sounds of which she assigned a secret revelation of times and events to come.

On the spot where the sacred tree had stood, two columns were afterwards erected, the one bearing on its top a basin made of brass, and the other the statue of a boy, holding in his hand a switch of metal, which the wind could shake, so as with every slight breeze to touch the basin, which produced a clear sound, varying according to the strength or lightness of the touch. As before the future was revealed by the rustling in the leaves of the

sacred tree, so it was now by the sounding of the brazen vessel. It was the changing breeze, swimming in the light air, whose mysterious language mortal man endeavoured to catch by means of the gently touched metal. It was the surrounding, speechless nature, with which man, desirous to learn from her his future fate, attempted to enter, as it were, into an intimate converse.

The interpretation of an accidental sound, was indeed the most natural commencement of oracles; the longing soul of man being always disposed to find a secret mysterious relation between the sounds produced by the elements, and the desires of his heart. Nor is it a matter of surprise, that the desire, so natural to every human breast, to know with a degree of certainty the accomplishment of some wish, readily suffered itself to be deceived.

The priests, not satisfied with the communications received by the sacred basin, caused the oracles of Jupiter to proceed from the very cavities of the trees, which gave rise to the poetical expression, Jupiter's sacred oaks themselves had spoken, revealing future events.

Even restless fancy, endeavours likewise here to endow the appearances of nature with life. The deity filled, with her presence, the whole grove sacred to her, and the rustling of every leaf was significant.

DELOS.

The Earth was bound by an oath, not to afford an asylum to hapless Latona, and whatever country the latter fixed upon for the native land of her children, it trembled; none dared to receive them. At last Latona ascended the barren Delos, which was exempt from the ban of Juno, promising that if it received the far-shooting Apollo, a temple should rise on its rocky ground, and that all nations would vie with each other in adorning it with precious gifts, and presenting it with hecatombs. Delos was wavering between joy and anxiety. Although its name would never cease to be gloriously mentioned

in all future times, and among all future generations, if Apollo was born within its boundaries, it apprehended that the god himself might despise it, because of its barren soil, and, in his anger, sink it into the deep. Latona was obliged to give the anxious isle the pledge of the inviolable oath, which was sworn by the gods, that on its ground the first temple of Apollo should be reared; upon the altar of which, the sacred fire should never be extinguished. Upon this, Delos was overjoyed at the far-shooting god's choosing it for his cradle; and it had reason to rejoice, for riches soon flowed from every side into the barren island. The virgins of Delos sang hymns, in which all nations supposed that they heard their own words and their own sounds: harmonious was the strain.*

The happy island added its name to that of Apollo. From the craggy mount Cynthus, on Delos, which the god with the silver-bow often ascended, he was named the Cynthian, and from Delos itself the Delian.

DELPHI.

In the remotest times, a cavern was discovered at the descent of Mount Parnassus, whose benumbing exhalations threw all who approached the opening into a kind of frenzy, during which, as if in a state of inspiration, they were accustomed unconsciously to speak of sublime subjects, to connect remote and seemingly incongruous ideas, and to utter a kind of mysterious poetic language, which, like the murmuring of a brook, or the sound of the Dodonean basin, admitted of a very arbitrary interpretation.

In the most ancient periods, it was Earth herself, who immediately gave oracles here. In the age of Deucalion, it was Themis, the daughter of Heaven and Earth, who revealed here the dark future, and the decrees of

* Hymn to Apoll. 162.

fate to mortal man. Apollo, at last, after having killed the dragon Python, that watched this sanctuary, took possession of the place, where he veiled his divinity in oracles through the mouth of the inspired Pythia.

While Apollo was occupied with founding on this spot his lasting abode, he one day descried afar off in the sea a merchant ship, from Crete, and immediately leaping into the water, and assuming the form of an enormous dolphin, he threw himself into the ship, forced the men of Crete to pass by the coast of Pylos, where they were bound, and to enter the harbour of Crissa. There, on a sudden, he appeared to the strangers in his majestic youthful form, and announced to them that they should never again see their home, but should serve as priests in his temple. And the men of Crete, bursting forth in pious hymns, followed the leading god to his sanctuary, at the descent of mount Parnassus. But when they beheld the barren country around, they besought Apollo to guard them against poverty and want. And the god looked at them, smiled, and said, "O foolish men, who trouble yourselves with anxious cares, and think of painful labour, hear a simple word from me: after a short while every one of you will here lay hold of the sacrificial knife, and victims shall never be wanting; for from all parts and countries of the earth shall they here be gathered together."*

Near the temple of Apollo, the city of Delphi was afterwards built, and the inhabitants grew rich and happy, even as the infallible god had predicted.

Immediately over the steaming cavern, in the midst of the temple, stood the golden tripod, on which Pythia, after a fast of three days, and after having sucked during that time the juice of bay-leaves, and bathed in the Castalian fountain, sat down as the instrument of the revealing god.

The priests carried her by force into the sanctuary,

* Hymn to Apoll. 531.

and as soon as she sat on the tripod, and the rising, inspiring steam began to operate, her hair bristled, her look grew wild, her mouth began to foam, and convulsive trembling seized her whole body. While she strove to free herself by force from the terrible seat, her yells resounded through the whole temple, until some single, abrupt, articulate sounds, capable of any interpretation, passed her lips. These were carefully noted down by the priests, and afterwards formed into an oracle, by being arranged in a metrical composition of verses. Meanwhile, the fainting Pythia was brought back into her cell, where she but slowly recovered from her exhausted state of body and mind.

It was as if she had been inspired by the presence of the god, whose yoke she strove to shake off by her struggles, and whose overwhelming power she endeavoured to oppose, until at last, unable to resist any longer, she uttered the words inspired by the god, and sank down fainting. While Pythia was sitting upon the tripod, she was closely surrounded by the priests of the temple, while two priestesses were busied to keep off the profane. The sanctuary itself was entirely covered with bay-branches; and in addition to this, the burning incense overclouded every thing, as if with mysterious night, which no profane curiosity ventured to investigate.

We may smile at the deceit practised by priestcraft in Apollo's temple at Delphi, as well as at that exhibited in every other place of the same kind; but those who went to receive oracles would not have been pleased to abandon the illusion, even if the veil of imposture had willingly been drawn aside: the longing of poor mortals for a knowledge of the future, having been at all times too great to be voluntarily renounced. The subjects, moreover, on which an oracle was consulted, were generally *ardent wishes*, in relation to the future; for the accomplishment of which the consent and blessing of the deity were solicited.

ARGOS.

Argos, in the first place, Juno herself mentions among her favourite and beloved cities. Urging Jupiter to consent to the destruction of Troy, a city which she hated, together with Priam's family, because of the decision of Paris on mount Ida, she endeavoured to carry her point by a kind of barter. "There are three cities," said she, "which are dearest of all to me, Argos, Sparta, and Mycene; nevertheless, I willingly part with them, I abandon them entirely to thy will, if thou wilt consent to the downfall of Troy."*

The reason why the city of Argos stood in such high favour with Juno, was the extraordinary veneration which was there paid her. There particular festivals were celebrated in her honour, which, from her Greek name, were called Hereæ, and during the celebration of which, her priestess, mounted on a splendid chariot, rode in triumph to the temple of the goddess, to offer there a hecatomb of white heifers.

Thus the goddess was here particularly venerated in the person of her high-priestess, a veneration with which the touching history of Cleobis and Biton is connected. One day, when the white heifers which were to draw their mother, a priestess of Argos, to Juno's temple, were not at hand, with filial piety they yoked themselves to the chariot, and drew it to the temple, forty-five stadia from their dwelling, lest their mother should be deprived of the honour of the day. When they arrived at the temple, the priestess, moved by the tender love of her sons, lifting up her arms to the great goddess, prayed that she might bestow on her pious children a gift most desirable to mortal men, whereupon Cleobis and Biton, after a cheerful meal, fell asleep to awake no more.

* Homer, Il. IV. 50.

OLYMPIA.

Here the sublime idea of the Olympian Jupiter was called from heaven to the earth by the plastic art of Phidias. Every expression of dignified majesty was united in this master-piece; it showed the god as he clears up the skies with a smile, and as, with the contraction of his brows, and the nod of his head, he shakes Olympus.

The statue was colossean, and made of ivory and gold. In his right hand the god held the image of victory, and in his left the artificial sceptre, at the top of which sat an eagle; upon the golden mantle which floated from the shoulders of the god, the various kinds of animals and flowers were represented in shining splendour. His throne glittered with gold and precious stones. At Jupiter's head and feet, as well as upon the walls of the temple, many mythological fictions were represented in reliefs, or pictures. The majesty of the whole divine world surrounded the throne of the supreme god and his statue, which reached from the floor of the temple to its vaulted ceiling.

At Olympia, too, every fifth year the Olympic games were celebrated in honour of Jupiter. The interval from one celebration of these games to another was called an Olympiad, and throughout all Greece, time was measured by Olympiads, because the Olympic games, attracting general attention, and being, at the same time, the most splendid objects on which imagination could dwell, were the fittest for aiding memory, and calling forth a recollection both of things and persons.

The temple of Jupiter was surrounded by a sacred grove, in which the statues of the conquerors in the Olympic games, made by the most eminent masters, were erected. Thus men united the glory of their own dignity with the veneration of their gods.

ATHENS.

In this favourite city of the goddess of wisdom and art, genius rose to the highest elevation of thought, where human nature, beholding her image reflected in the works of art and science, first became, as it were, conscious of herself, while formerly one generation after another dreamed away the short span of life in a kind of stupor, leaving behind no traces of its existence.

The Panathenæa, celebrated here in honour of Pallas Athene, was a noble festival, in which the whole city devoted itself, as it were, anew to the goddess, by a praiseworthy emulation in art and science.

The statue of the goddess in her temple at Athens was, like that of the Olympian Jupiter, made of gold and ivory, and was likewise a work of the divine Phidias, into which the deity had descended from Olympus to the earth.

CYPRUS.

Here it was that the waves of the sea gently carried to the shore the goddess of love, when she had risen from the froth of the waters. On this charming island, whole cities, together with groves, temples, and altars, were consecrated to Venus. Her favourite residence, however, was Paphos, where offerings and vows were presented in her temple from every quarter of the earth. And from the veneration with which all nations paid here their homage to the goddess of beauty, she was called Queen of Paphos. From two other places on Cyprus, Amathus and Idalium, she received the poetical appellations, Idalia and Amathusia, and from the island itself she had the name of Cypria.

GNIDUS.

From the remotest countries pilgrims came to Gnidus, there also to pay homage to the love-inspiring goddess, whom skilful art had endowed with human form, and thus rendered visible to the eyes of men. There Venus stood in an open temple, unveiled to the view of mortals. It was the Venus of Praxiteles, a worthy object of admiration to all nations.

CYTHERA.

The most ancient temple of Venus in Greece stood on this island, and the idea of the goddess herself was so intimately connected with the place of her residence, that both names became one, and, in poetical language, the goddess of love was called Cytheræa.

LEMNOS.

In the island of Lemnos, where earthquakes and eruptions of volcanoes were frequently experienced, and also in the smoking Ætna, in Sicily, from whose bowels the fire which found no vent often produced a subterraneous thundering, imagination has discovered suitable places to fix the workshop of Vulcan, in which the mighty hammers of the Cyclops resounded.

This island is said to have received the god.

"His hand was known
In heav'n by many a tow'red structure high.
Nor was his name unheard, or unador'd
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell
From heav'n they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements. From morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day: and with the setting sun,
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos, th' Ægean isle. Thus they relate."*

* Paradise Lost, B. I. 732, ss.

Lemnos, therefore, continued to be sacred to Vulcan, the idea of his deity being, through this spot, principally connected with his earthly existence.

EPHESUS.

All Asia strove in emulation to adorn Diana's temple at Ephesus, in which the goddess was represented by a statue with many breasts, to intimate the all-nourishing mother, Nature, venerated here under the image of Diana. Thus one deity, whose name had become pre-eminent, involved that of all others, and, in this way, became a kind of Pantheon.

From the remotest countries pilgrimages were undertaken to Diana's temple at Ephesus, which, being one of the most eminent among the divine seats, invited, at the same time, by its external magnificence, which was the work of many kings, to the veneration of the goddess who had made it her habitation.

THRACE.

Here it was that the fierce god of war was chiefly worshipped, and where he found a proper home, Thrace being always represented by poetry as the seat of whatever is impetuous, wild, and cruel. Thus Diomedes, a Thracian, and a son of Mars, is said to have had every stranger, who was so unfortunate as to fall into his hands, thrown to his horses, who fed upon flesh, to be devoured by them. Another Thracian, also a son of Mars, was that Tereus who cut out the tongue of the unfortunate Philomela, lest she should betray the crime that he had committed against her. Thrace, according to ancient fiction, was likewise that country where the rough, stormy Boreas had his dwelling, for which reason those unknown nations, that lived beyond Thrace, were called Hyperboreans. The devotees of Bacchus, who went under the name of Bistonides, roved

about on the mountains of Thrace, having snakes twisted in their hair.

Nevertheless, Thrace was also the native land of Orpheus, that divine bard, who, by his song and the tones of his lyre, tamed the fierceness of forest beasts, and moved trees and rocks. Nay, even Orcus was induced by the mighty strains of his instrument to restore to him his beloved wife Eurydice, who had died an early death, on the condition that he should not look back at her until she had reached the higher world, and beheld again the light of day. But when the affectionate couple had almost attained the opening which led to the world above, and were about to leave the gloomy abode of the shades, tender anxiety and doubt, whether his dear companion was really following him, induced the affectionate husband, in spite of himself, to look back: he beheld his wife close behind him, but for the last time. Falling back, she vanished again in the night and darkness of Orcus, and all the sweet hope of Orpheus is nothing but a dream. The joy of his life was now lost for ever, and his lyre was silent. But from the Thracian mountains resounded the furious clamour of the Mænades, who, angry at the bard, because after the loss of his Eurydice the whole female sex was odious to him, tore him to pieces. Thus Orpheus, the son of Apollo, the divine poet, musician, and philosopher, fell a victim to the frantic fury of the devotees of Bacchus.

ARCADIA.

In the ancient mythological fictions, Arcadia does not appear in that charming sun-shine of sweet pastoral life, the theatre of which is generally placed here by modern poetry, in which, with the very name of this country something tender and alluring is associated. With the ancients, on the contrary, the idea of simplicity of manners, commonly ascribed to the Arcadians, involves, at the same time, that of a certain rudeness and idleness

of character, which scarcely permit us to regard that simplicity as a virtue. Neither was the climate of Arcadia the most agreeable; it was rougher than that of the adjacent territories, on account of the mountainous situation of the country.

The circumstance, however, that according to the tradition of old, the pastoral deities had here originated, and revealed here principally their presence; and that according to ancient fictions the new-born deity of Mercury first descended from Mount Cyllene, in Arcadia, attached to that mountainous country a peculiar sacredness.

PHRYGIA.

In Phrygia, as a beautiful ancient tale relates, Jupiter and Mercury wandered in disguise among men, to try their character and actions. One evening, when, like tired travellers, they were looking for a hospitable roof, the doors of the rich and happy remained shut to them. *Philemon* and *Baucis*, a pious couple, but poor and already advanced in years, hospitably received the strangers in their humble cottage. Old Baucis immediately went to catch a goose, the only one she possessed, in order to treat the welcome guests in the best manner her circumstances permitted. The goose escaped from her hands, and sought refuge under Jupiter's feet, and the god saved its life. Then the celestials, after having made themselves known to the pious couple, led them to a neighbouring hill, from which they could behold the waste and destruction, wherewith the gods had punished the hard-heartedness of the inhabitants of the country. The houses and palaces of the rich had become ruined by a deluge, while the poor, hospitable cottage still raised its roof out of the floods, and before the astonished eyes of its late inhabitants was transformed into a magnificent temple. And when Jupiter bade the hospitable old couple ask a gift of him, the highest wish of

Philemon and Baucis was, to bring offerings to Jove, the patron and rewarder of hospitality, in the newly risen temple, and there to minister as priests until their death. This request was accordingly granted, and a new one permitted; but nothing remained to be asked by the fortunate couple, except that they might never be separated, that they might die together in the same moment. Their wish was attained.

Two trees, an oak and a lime, which overshadowed the temple, were long afterwards called Philemon and Baucis, in memory of the pious couple, who, in the same instant, had been transformed into them.

In this and similar traditions of old, the dreadful, as well as the beneficent power of the divinity, was recognised and revered. Every where altars were erected to hospitable Jupiter, (Jupiter hospitalis.) The strangers that arrived at any place, and were destitute of friends and protectors, stood under his immediate protection; guests were considered as sacred and inviolable persons; for in strangers and guests the celestials themselves were revered, who often came down from Olympus in human shape, to walk among men.

THE GODLIKE RACE OF MEN.

When Nestor, who had lived through two ages, and who was reigning over Pylos in the third, endeavoured, during the siege of Troy, to allay the contention and animosity which subsisted between Achilles and Agamemnon, he reminded them, in the beginning of his speech, that he had been living and communing with stronger men than the present age produced; with Ceneus, Dryas, Pirithous, and Theseus, with whom no man of the present generation would dare enter into combat; and that they all, nevertheless, had listened to

and followed his advice. Achilles, therefore, and Agamemnon, he added, might do the same.

Thus Nestor describes the heroes before the time of the Trojan war, and the bard of the Iliad, in his turn, represents the heroes of the Trojan war as having far surpassed in strength the men of his age. Hector, (says he,) took up a stone, which two of the strongest men living in our times could scarcely lift from the ground into a wagon, and flung it with ease against the door of the Greek wall, with such force that the leaves sprung at once from their hinges.

Men, whom Prometheus had first formed of clay, though odious to the reigning gods, deprived by them of fire, destroyed, except a few, by several deluges, whose descendants lived through centuries in stupid dulness, like the animals of the field; men, rising by degrees from their inanimate and brutish state, through their own efforts, by a noble self-esteem, and the application of their inward powers, became assimilated to the immortal gods. Humanity grew sensible of her worth and her higher destination, by beholding the godlike heroes who rose from the midst of her; and the gods now becoming, as it were, reconciled to mankind, took more and more interest in their transactions and their fates. Thus divinity and humanity approached nearer and nearer, until at last, in the war with Troy, the gods themselves took part in the fights of men, and were wounded by mortal hands.

It is for this reason, that, in the poetic language of the ancients, no expression is oftener used, than that of the *god-resembling*, or *godlike*, whereby the heroes of yore are exalted, and human strength and virtue extolled. And, indeed, who can read or hear, even in our times, the heroic names of *Perseus*, *Cadmus*, *Hercules*, *Theseus*, *Jason*, without raising them in his imagination, in spite of himself, to beings of a higher order, who, although born on this earth, by their deeds and by their fame have risen to the skies.

The history of Perseus belongs to the earliest period of the heroic age, and is therefore most involved in the clouds of fable. To trace the earthly descent of this hero, it becomes necessary to rise again to old Inachus, whose daughter Io gave Jupiter a son in Egypt, named Epaphus. Libya, the royal daughter of the latter, became the mother of Belus and Agenor, the sons of Neptune. Belus was the father of Danaus and Egyptus.

Danaus came from Egypt over to Greece, to assert and maintain his claims to the kingdom of Argos against Gelanor, who at that time actually reigned over the country. The claims of the former rested on his descent from Inachus; those of the latter on the right of possession. The people themselves were called upon to decide to whom the royal crown should belong, and while they were yet wavering and doubtful, a wolf, rushing into a herd of cows, conquered the bull that defended them. This unexpected accident was considered by the people as a sign given by the gods, that the stranger, and not the native, was destined to reign. Danaus accordingly ascended the throne, and the Argives are indebted to him for the knowledge of the digging of wells, and the building of ships.

Danaus, if the old legend relate truth, had fifty daughters, and his brother, Egyptus, the same number of sons. The latter came over to Greece, each of them intending to marry a daughter of Danaus; but Danaus, who, by an oracle, had received warning that one of his sons-in-law would deprive him of his royal authority, anxious to keep his throne, commanded each of his daughters to kill her husband in the first night. This cruel order was accordingly obeyed by all of them except Hypermnestra, who, notwithstanding the danger which threatened her own life, suffered Lynceus, her beloved husband, to fly.

One, exclaimed an ancient poet, one out of many, worthy of the youth she loved, deceived with glorious craft her father's cruelty, and eternally shines her re-

nown!* Up, whispered she to her slumbering husband, rise, lest everlasting sleep press upon thee, ere thou art aware of it! Up, and flee my father and my blood-thirsty sisters, who are tearing their husbands like lionesses! My heart is of a more tender mould! I kill thee? No, I cannot. Or keep thee a prisoner within these walls? I will not! Let my father burden me with heavy chains, or cast me out in the most desert wilderness! Go whither thy feet and the winds carry thee, while yet night and Venus are thy protectors; go, and may happy stars shine on thee! In memory of me, engrave, in some future day, on my tombstone, thy complaint for me!

Lynceus fled, but to return again, for Danaus became reconciled to his daughter, and Perseus and Hercules, the godlike heroes, are descendants of the faithful couple, Lynceus and Hypermnestra. The cruel deed committed by the rest of Danaus' daughters did not remain unavenged; they suffered for their crime in the lower world.

Abas, a son of Lynceus, reigned after his father's death over Argos, and left two sons, Prœtus and Acrisius, who, at different times, contested with one another the royal authority. A grandson of Acrisius was

PERSEUS.

Acrisius also, in his turn, feared destruction from his descendants. As it had been predicted to him that he should be killed by one of his grandsons, he shut up his only daughter, Danäe, in a brazen tower, in order to render the prediction ineffectual. But his precaution was disappointed by Jupiter, who, descending in a golden shower through an opening in the roof of the building, into Danae's chamber, made her the mother of Perseus.

As soon as Perseus was born, his grandfather com-

* Cf. Statius Theb. IV. 132. Apollod. II. 1. 4.

mitted both mother and child, in a crazy bark, to the waves of the sea. The benevolent goddesses of the deep, tenderly taking up the divine boy, together with his mother, in the lap of the waters, brought the bark to a haven, on the shores of the small island Seriphus, in the Ægean sea, where Polydectes, king of the island, kindly received both mother and child, and superintended the education of young Perseus.

No sooner did Perseus become sensible of the divine power that dwelt in him, than his thoughts were turned towards conquering and destroying the monsters that plagued and desolated the earth. The first and boldest undertaking in which the young, aspiring hero, em barked, was to separate the pernicious, petrifying head of Medusa from her body. Accoutred by the gods themselves with the helmet of Orcus, the wings of Mercury, and the shield of Minerva, he entered on the daring undertaking, with averted look, beholding the image of Medusa while asleep, in the shining metal of his shield, and Minerva invisibly directing his arm, lest he should miss his aim. When Perseus had fortunately brought down the deadly stroke, Stheno and Euryale, the two sisters of Medusa, sighed and groaned so loud at the view of their slain sister, and the hissing of the snakes upon their heads echoed so mournfully to their groaning, as to induce Minerva, moved at the terrible concert, to invent a flute, with which she endeavoured to revive these mournful sounds, by imitating their different strains. Thus, even in the midst of sanguinary and terrible destruction, the goddess of Art shines forth.

Minerva was the chief instigator to this bloody deed, having resolved on the destruction of Medusa, because, in company with Neptune, the monster had profaned her sanctuary. Nevertheless, the winged Pegasus, Neptune's son, sprang from the blood of his killed mother, and was destined by the will of the gods to carry on his back the conquerors of the monsters, first Perseus and after him Bellerophon.

Taking the petrifying head of Medusa in his hand, and bestriding the winged horse Pegasus, Perseus then passed in rapid flight over sea and lands. Atlas, who denied him access to the gardens of the Hesperides, was transformed by the sight of Medusa's head into that mountain, which ever after bore the name of Japet's great son, on whose shoulders rested the sky.

After this first exploit, which procured for him the possession of Medusa's head, as well as the winged horse Pegasus, Perseus, throwing from on high his piercing glance over the earth, fixed his eyes upon the Phœnician coast, where he beheld a maiden fastened with chains to a rock, and a monster rising out of the sea and going to devour her, while her parents stood on the shore, wringing their hands in despair. Perseus rushed down upon the monster at the very moment it was seizing its prey, struck the deadly blow, and delivered the fair maiden. It was Andromeda, who, in order to atone for a crime which she had not committed, for the insolent vanity of her mother, was to have become the victim of divine anger.

Cassiopeia, mother of Andromeda, and wife of Cepheus, had dared to compare her beauty with that of the powerful daughters of Nereus. The whole country was laid waste by plagues, which, according to the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, were not to cease, unless Andromeda, swallowed up by a sea-monster, should expiate by her death the crime of her mother.

The parents of Andromeda, having been themselves witnesses of their daughter's rescue, readily complied with the wish of her valorous deliverer, and gave her to Perseus in marriage. Phineus, however, brother of Cepheus, to whom Andromeda formerly had been betrothed, accompanied by an armed body, entered the hall, when the wedding-feast was celebrating, and furiously assailed the bridegroom, who would have been lost but for the head of Medusa. Calling to his friends to turn away their eyes, he stretched it forth against

Phineus and his companions, and in a moment they became petrified statues.

Perseus, after having accomplished these exploits, conducted his spouse to Seriphus, where he saw again his mother and Polydectes. But alas! he was here compelled to turn the petrifying head against his foster father and benefactor. Polydectes, afraid of him and his mighty arm, made an attempt upon his life, but was punished for his cowardly suspicion by being transformed into a rock.

When Perseus heard that his grandfather Acrisius had been deprived of his throne by his brother Prœtus, far from seeking revenge for the cruelty with which he and his mother had formerly been treated by Acrisius, he magnanimously hastened to Argolis, with the design of replacing his grandfather in possession of his kingdom. He vanquished and killed Prœtus, and after having restored to Acrisius the royal crown, he was recognised by him with joy and gratitude as his beloved grandson, his friend and benefactor. But *fate*, which trifles with the hopes of mortals, had not recalled its former threat, and a tragic end was lurking beneath the seducing appearance. Perseus, knowing how much Acrisius was delighted with his skill in every bodily exercise, was resolved one day to give him a splendid proof of his dexterity; but alas! the fatal quoit, as if directed by an evil demon, missing its aim, struck the head of Acrisius, and he fell lifeless to the ground.

In consequence of this unfortunate accident, Perseus passed his future days in melancholy sadness, calling himself, notwithstanding his innocence of the fatal event, a parricide. His residence at Argos became insupportable, and therefore he induced the son of Prœtus to exchange territories. But not finding either at Tiryns, the capital of his new dominion, any rest to obliterate as far as possible from his memory the event which distracted him, he built the new city of Mycene.

The head of Medusa was devoted by Perseus to Mi-

nerva, who placed it in the centre of her glittering shield, the mighty Ægis, where it became a significant symbol of her power, and the appalling coldness which forms the principal feature of her character.

Perseus himself, and the chief persons connected with his history, Andromeda, Cassiopeia, and others, were, according to fiction, transposed among the constellations of the sky, where their names are immortalized. In this sense the heroes of old were really raised to heaven, and a monument, most durable and shining, was erected to their names.

One of the children of Perseus and Andromeda was Alcæus, the father of Amphitryon, who was married to Alcmene, Electryon's daughter, and the mother of Hercules. Another son of Perseus, whose name was Sthenelus, was the father of Eurystheus, who ruled over Mycene, and whom Hercules was afterwards compelled to serve.

Although Perseus is, in time, the first among the ancient heroes, and although in some places temples and altars were built to his honour, yet the most illustrious glory was reserved for Hercules, who, bearing the greatest pains and perils of life, and persecuted from his very birth by the cruel hatred of Juno, with persevering patience made a way for himself to immortality. The renown of Perseus was thrown into shade by Alcmene's son, to whom every where temples were built, and altars devoted, and who, after having terminated his honourable course on earth, was crowned with glory, and took his seat among the celestials. Nevertheless, the heroic part assigned to Perseus in the theatre of antiquity, is beautiful and charming, and bears much resemblance to the chivalry of the middle ages.

An elegant and significant representation of Perseus is found upon an antique gem. The hero stands upright, in a majestic posture, having his naked sword in his right hand, and holding with his left the severed head of Medusa behind his back, as if apprehensive

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that what was to become the terror of his adversaries, might be destructive to himself.

BELLEROPHON.

The same Prœtus by whom Acrisius was deprived of his kingdom, and who was at last vanquished and slain by Perseus, urged on by a false suspicion, gave to Bellerophon the first occasion for his heroic feats. Bellerophon was a grandson of Sisyphus, the founder of Corinth, who was a descendant of Deucalion, and the son of Æolus, from whom the Æolic race of heroes spread through many royal families of Greece. Having committed a murder, Bellerophon was forced to flee from Corinth, and he came to Prœtus, who at that time was reigning in Argos, to find an asylum with him. Antæa, the wife of Prœtus, a daughter of King Iobates, in Lycia, conceived a tender affection for the handsome youth, which, however, was soon changed into hatred, because it found no return on the part of Bellerophon. She basely accused him of an attempt to seduce her, and enjoined her husband to avenge both her and himself. Prœtus, to whom the rights of hospitality were too sacred to allow him to kill Bellerophon himself, sent him to his father-in-law, Iobates, in Lycia, with a letter, in which Iobates was desired to avenge the crime of which the deliverer was accused, by putting him to death. Iobates, however, did not read the letter until he had hospitably received Bellerophon, after which he also abhorred the thought of violating the sacred rights of hospitality. He therefore trusted to accident to effect his ruin, bidding him embark in the most dangerous enterprises, in which his destruction seemed inevitable.

Of the monsters which descended from Phorcys and fair Ceto, one, the terrible Gorgo, was vanquished by Perseus, but another, not less formidable, was assigned to Bellerophon, as a trial of his valour. It was the fire-vomiting Chimera, with the head of a lion, the body of a

goat, and the tail of a dragon. To this bold adventure the gods lent their assistance, granting Bellerophon the winged horse Pegasus. The hero bestrode him, and then in the air began the fight. The monster defended herself to the utmost, sending from her mouth whole masses of fire, and coiling her dragon-tail in formidable windings. But all this did not avail her. After a persevering and obstinate struggle, the monster lay stretched on the ground, weltering in her blood.

Thus the most difficult task which is assigned to the heroes of antiquity, is always the killing of monsters, of unnatural beings, who by degrees must vanish from the chain of things. It seems almost as if these fictions implied the allusion, that truth and dream, reality and fable, had long to struggle with one another, until things could get a fixed and lasting order in the human mind. And it was a worthy task of the heroes of humanity, to banish the unnatural appearances and illusory exhibitions, in order to create around her regularity, light, and truth. The Sphinx hurled from the height of the rock which she occupied, every one who could not solve her enigma; but Œdipus had no sooner unriddled it than she flung herself down into the abyss.

Not enough that Bellerophon had vanquished Chimera, the pest of the land; he must now conquer the human enemies of Iobates, the courageous Solymans and Amazons; and when he returned victorious from this expedition, a troop of Lycians lay in ambuscade, waiting for him, to take his life; but the hero escaped this danger, too, by slaying his enemies. Then at last Iobates knew that Bellerophon was of divine origin, gave him his daughter in marriage, and shared his kingdom with him.

But the happiness of this hero also was but of short continuance. When Bellerophon, elated by his victories, mounted upon Pegasus, and vaulted high in the air towards the skies, with the intention of approaching the seat of the immortals, they hurled him

down as far beneath as he had risen above, by sending a horse-fly, the sting of which made Pegasus bound in the air so furiously as to throw his rider.

He who formerly was the favourite of the gods, seemed now to have become odious to them. Domestic misfortune, cares, and sorrows, shortened his days. Retiring from the society of men, and abandoning himself entirely to gloom and melancholy, he lived a solitary and unhappy life until death relieved him from his grief.

Bellerophon is commonly represented in the act of killing Chimera. Riding on Pegasus in the air, he is armed with helmet and spear, with which he is going to attack the monster.

HERCULES, HERACLES.

The first Greek tragedian introduces Prometheus, when, chained to the rock, he is complaining of his sufferings to the equally unfortunate Io, predicting the birth of his deliverer, Hercules.

Io, transformed into a cow, was driven in frantic fury over the whole earth by Juno's jealousy. She came to the solitary corner where Prometheus was suffering, who revealed her future fate, as well as his own, telling her that the *thirteenth* of her descendants would be his deliverer. The thirteen members of the family, in uninterrupted line of descent, are: Io, Epaphus, Libya, Belus, Danaus, Lynceus, Atlas, Acrisius, Danäe, Perseus, Alcæus, Alcmene, Hercules.

Two of the most terrible children of Phorcys and Ceto are vanquished by Perseus and Bellerophon; but the greatest feats of valour, as well as merit, are reserved for Hercules, who is to conquer monsters, to subdue tyrants, and to set bounds to the injustice of the Thunderer himself, at last delivering from his torments Prometheus, who was still suffering for the benefits which he had conferred on mankind.

Hercules' future fate was already woven in the com-

mencement of his life's thread by the inexorable Parcæ. Born to be a ruler, he was forced by the power of fate to obey, and to achieve his most glorious actions at the command of one, who, in every respect, was inferior to him, and who dreaded his strength.

Electryon, Sthenelus, Alcæus, and Mestor, were the sons of Perseus, of whom Electryon succeeded his father in the government of Mycene. The children of Alcæus were Anaxo and Amphitryon. Electryon married Anaxo, and of this marriage sprang Alcmene, the mother of Hercules. Amphitryon lived at Electryon's court, and had the surest hope of becoming his uncle's successor in the government, Electryon having firmly resolved on marrying his daughter Alcmene to him. This hope, however, proved vain.

Taphius, a grandson of Mestor, had founded a colony on the island of Taphos, whose inhabitants called themselves Taphians, or, because of their living at a great distance from their native country, Teleboans. After the death of Taphius, Pterelaus, his son and successor, claimed a part of the inheritance of Mycene, on account of his descent from Mestor, a son of Perseus, and sent his children thither to enforce his claims. Upon Electryon's denying the justice of them, and refusing to restore any thing of Perseus' inheritance, the sons of Pterelaus, with their people, laid waste the country, and drove away the royal herds. The sons of Electryon, immediately collecting a body of men, fought a battle with the invaders, in which the leaders on both sides were killed, with the exception of one son of Electryon, Licymnius, and one of Pterelaus, Eueres.

Upon this Electryon resolved on going in person, to avenge the death of his children, against the Teleboans, and transferred the government of Mycene to his daughter, Alcmene, and his nephew, Amphitryon, with the promise that they should marry one another as soon as he should have returned victorious. He returned conqueror, bringing back the herds of which he had

been deprived by his enemies. Amphitryon, quite secure now of his happiness, joyfully went to meet him; but when one of the recovered cows strayed from the herd, Amphitryon, with the intention of turning her back, threw a club at her, and instead of hitting the cow struck Electryon, who fell lifeless to the ground.

The consequence of this fatal occurrence was, that Amphitryon's hopes of one day becoming king of Mycene, were blighted, and the future fate of Hercules was thoroughly settled. For although the act of Amphitryon was unintentional, yet it loaded him with the hatred of the people. Sthenelus, the brother of the slain Electryon, seized upon the royal crown of Mycene without resistance, and Amphitryon was compelled to flee to Thebes, whither Alcmene followed him. Creon, who at that time was king of Thebes, took them both under his protection. Alcmene, however, refused to become Amphitryon's wife, until he should have avenged the death of her brothers, by entering on a new war against the Teleboans, and by vanquishing Pterelaus. Amphitryon accordingly entered into an alliance with Cephalus, Eleus, and several other neighbouring princes, for the purpose of waging a new war against the inhabitants of the Taphian islands. Pterelaus was vanquished, and Amphitryon divided the conquered islands among his allies; the one of which, called in ancient times Cephalene, and in ours Cephalonia, received its name from the above mentioned Cephalus.

Meanwhile, however, Alcmene's charms having attracted the Thunderer, he came down from his Olympian seat to see her, assuming the form of Amphitryon, who was returning as victor from his expedition. Hercules was the fruit of their intercourse. Jupiter appeased Amphitryon's anger at Alcmene, by revealing to him his divinity; and while Alcmene was pregnant with Hercules, and, at the same time, with a son of Amphitryon, and to Sthenelus also, king of Mycene, a son was

about to be born, the following transactions happened in the council of the gods.

On the day in which Hercules was to be born, Jupiter boastingly spoke in the assembly of the celestials: "I give you to understand, all ye gods and goddesses, that to-day a hero will be born, of a race of men who derive their origin from me, who is destined to reign over all his neighbours!"* Brooding artifices, the cunning Juno replied: "I shall nevertheless doubt very much the accomplishment of thy words, unless thou swear with the inviolable oath of the gods, that he who to-day shall be born of the race of men that derive their origin from thee, will indeed reign over all his neighbours." Scarcely had Jupiter uttered the fatal oath, ere Juno left Olympus, hastening to Argos, where she forwarded the deliverance of the wife of Sthenelus, although the time was premature, and retarded that of Alcmene. Then returning to Olympus, she thus triumphantly accosted Jupiter: "The hero who will rule over the Argives is already born. He is descended from the race of men that sprang forth from thee, for he is Eurystheus, a son of Sthenelus, whose father, Perseus, was thine offspring. The promised kingdom, therefore, is fallen to the part of no unworthy one."

The luckless father of the gods, not able to recall his oath, nor to avenge himself against the wily Juno, burst out in unspeakable wrath, and seizing the bright hand of *Ate*, the evil-breeding power, who was his own daughter, and until now a member of the divine assembly, he hurled her from heaven to earth, swearing with a great oath, that she should never return to Olympus. Since that time Ate hovers over the heads of men, sowing every where dissension, broils, and ruin. Whenever, therefore, in ancient times, enemies laid aside their contests, and became reconciled, they always ascribed the

* Hom. Il. XIX. 101, ss.

active cause and commencement of their dissension to Ate.

Fate itself had destined Hercules to the severest trials, which neither gods nor men could avert. Eurystheus was now born a ruler by the oath of Jupiter, and Jupiter, bound by this oath, was not able to free his beloved son from hard bondage.

Alcmene became the mother of two sons, Hercules, whose father was Jupiter, and Iphicles, the son of her husband, Amphitryon. Which of these was son of the Thunderer, soon became evident. While the two children were cradled in a hollow buckler, part of the booty which Amphitryon had made in the war against Pterelaus, Juno sent two snakes to destroy Hercules, but the divine babe stifled the reptiles with his infant hands. By this proof Jupiter recognised his son, and finding Juno sleeping, he laid Hercules to her breast, who by this means sucked the divine milk without her knowing it. When Juno awoke, she flung far away from her the bold suckling, sprinkling upon the vault of the sky the drops of milk which fell from her breast, the marks of which formed the galaxy, or milky way, on which the gods walk.

Fiction becomes here colossean; the atmosphere, through which the stars shine, appears therein as Juno's chief archetype.

At Jupiter's command, Mercury committed Hercules to his tutors, who were to instruct him in warlike occupations, as well as in peaceful arts. Several of them were themselves sons of deities: Linus, the son of Apollo, taught him music, and Chiron, the wise Centaur, the knowledge of salutary herbs and drugs. In the warlike arts, the most renowned heroes who lived at that time were his masters.

When in the pursuit of these occupations, Hercules had reached the years of puberty, he one day betook himself to a lonely spot, to muse, undisturbed, on his future life and fate, and sitting down in a crossway, he

sunk in deep reflection. On this occasion two females appeared before him, of whom the one was Luxury, and the other Virtue. Each endeavoured to win the youth to her interest: Luxury, by promising him every enjoyment of a cheerful, careless life, if he would follow her; Virtue, by announcing to him laborious and troublesome days, but afterwards glory and immortality, if he would choose her for his guide in the path of life. After a short time of thoughtful silence on the part of Hercules, Virtue had the victory. "Thee will I follow, to thee devote my life," exclaimed the youth, with glowing heart, grasping, at the same time, the hand of Virtue; and he followed her with firm step, resolved to endure patiently every trial that awaited him, to bear every burden which should fall to his lot, and to shun no labour that should be appointed him, however difficult it might be.

Hercules was not permitted to live long in quiet at the house of his foster-father, Amphitryon. Jealous Juno had infused into the heart of the latter dread and supicion against the young hero, and Hercules, therefore, was sent by him to the court of Eurystheus, at Mycene, where, from time to time, he was charged with the most dangerous undertakings, and the most difficult labours, which put his courage and firmness to the severest proof. On his journey to Mycene, Hercules inquired of the oracle at Delphi about his future fate, and received for answer, that twelve labours awaited him at the court of Eurystheus, after the performance of which immortality should be his reward.

THE TWELVE LABOURS OF HERCULES.

1st. *The Nemæan lion.*—When Hercules, while a youth, was guarding Eurystheus' herds, near the forest of Nemæa, a monstrous lion, whose hide no arrow was able to pierce, wasted the surrounding country, and threatened ruin to the herds.

The first of the twelve labours which Eurystheus commanded Hercules to perform, was the subduing of this beast of prey. The young hero did not fail to pursue the tracks of the lion, and to commence the fight as soon as he had found him. Iron was too weak to wound the monster, and Hercules flung his sinewy arms round his neck, and strangled him.

In memory of this first exploit, which was a pledge of the performance of all the others, Hercules ever afterwards wore the hide of the lion round his shoulders, and it became, together with the club which he had cut from the knotty branch of a wild olive tree, the external mark of his extraordinary strength, as well as of his invincible valour.

Hercules carried the lion to Mycene; but Eurystheus, alarmed by his heroic feat, forbade him to come henceforth within the walls of the city, ordering him to give an account of his future deeds before the gates.

2d. *The Lernæan hydra.*—In the morasses of Lerna, near Argos, was the abode of that hydra, with many heads, which has been already mentioned in the pedigree of the monsters, descended from Phorcys and fair Ceto.

The time of the heroes was death to the monsters, who are extirpated from the earth one after the other by the arm of the divine sons. And as Perseus had fought with Gorgo, and Bellerophon with the fire-vomiting Chimera, so now Hercules, at the command of Eurystheus, entered on the fearful struggle with the Lernæan hydra.

He attacked the monster with his sickle-shaped sword, but when he had severed one head from the trunk, immediately a new one rose out of the blood. At last, when the utmost peril threatened the hero, it occurred to his companion, Iolaus, the son of Iphicles, to fetch firebrands from the neighbouring woods, and instantly to scorch every wound, before a new head could spring up. Thus the greatest danger being avoided, a new one

presented itself. Juno, to render victory to Hercules still difficult, or rather impossible, sent a lobster, which gnawed at the heels of the hero, while he was struggling with the monster, so as to force him to turn himself back. But surmounting this obstacle too, the son of the Thunderer, after a long fight, drove the last head of the hydra, which was invulnerable, deep into the ground, rolling an immense stone over it.

As a reward for his labour, he dipped his arrows in the spilled blood of the hydra, which, by the deadly poison, now became doubly dreadful, but which were afterwards to bring pains and ruin on their possessor, even through the death of his foe.

If invincible courage and perseverance in surmounting innumerable obstacles, and ever renewed dangers, can be indicated by a striking emblem, it is in this fiction of Hercules' victory over the many-headed monster. For this reason, too, ancient and modern poets have always employed this picture of fancy, because a more significant one cannot possibly be substituted.

3d. *The Erymanthean boar.*—From the Erymanthean mountains a monstrous boar descended, laying waste the fields of Arcadia. This afforded Eurystheus a wished-for occasion of sending Hercules on a new and dangerous expedition. To the conqueror of the Nemæan lion, and the many-headed hydra, however, it was no difficult task to catch the boar alive, and to carry him to Eurystheus, who, terrified at the sight of the monster, hid himself in a brazen butt.

In this ridiculous situation Eurystheus is represented upon an antique gem. The striking contrast between the strength and valour of the personage who obeys, and the weakness and cowardice of the commander, gives to this fiction a more vivid interest. By the hero's conquering himself, to obey, according to the decree of fate, an inferior, his boldest deeds acquire a double value, because he first obtains the victory over himself, and then subdues the monsters.

4th. *The stag of Diana.*—In order now to put to the proof the swiftness and agility of Hercules, as well as his strength, a new and extraordinary phenomenon makes its appearance. On mount Mænalus, in Arcadia, was a stag, decorated with golden antlers, which excited in every one a wish to possess him, although he was sacred to Diana.

Eurystheus, who had only to command, accordingly ordered Hercules to catch the precious stag alive, and to bring him to Mycene. Hercules, not refusing the difficult task, pursued, with unremitted patience, during a whole year, the tracks of the nimble animal, until he caught him at last in a thicket, and carried him on his shoulders to the gates of Mycene.

5th. *The Stymphalides.*—A kind of ghastly birds haunted the Stymphalian lake, in Arcadia. The imagination of the poets ascribes to these winged monsters the most frightful aspect. They were furnished with claws and bills of brass, enabling them to wound and kill, and to pierce every armour; according to several fictions, they were moreover armed with darts, which they flung against their aggressors. The place in which they had taken up their abode, was the deep recesses of an inaccessible morass and thicket.

Eurystheus commanded Hercules to destroy these monsters; and here the divine hero would have been at a loss, notwithstanding all his strength and courage, but for the aid of Minerva, who wished his success. She presented him with a rattle of brass, the noise of which frightened the birds from their haunts, and as soon as they were hovering in the air, Hercules killed them with his arrows.

6th. *The girdle of the queen of the Amazons.*—Bellerophon had been compelled to fight against the Amazons, and Eurystheus did not fail to charge Hercules also with this dangerous enterprise.

The idea of the Amazons, who abandoned their newborn sons, rearing only their daughters to warlike ex-

ercises and battles, is not without its poetical beauty and we often find it interwoven among the fictions of the ancients. Plastic art also dwells on this subject, and the representation of battles, fought by these heroines, is often to be seen upon ancient marble coffins, where, in assault and defeat, manly valour, connected with female form, offers a charming contrast.

The precious girdle which the queen of the Amazons wore, and which Hercules was to win, had been a present of the god of war himself, and, defended as it was by fortitude and bravery, it could not be obtained except by invincible courage. Hercules was accompanied on this expedition by Theseus. At the river Thermodon the fight began, in which the Amazons, with their allies, were vanquished, and the queen herself was taken prisoner. Hercules, after having accomplished on his way several other bold feats, returned to Mycene, and presented to Eurystheus the desired girdle.

7th. *Augias' stable.*—Augias, a king in Elis, and called a child of the sun, from the immense number of flocks and herds which he possessed, was one of the wealthiest princes of his time. And, as in those ages a man's wealth was estimated in proportion to the abundance of his cattle, the occupations required by possessions of this kind were not degrading, nor was it considered disgraceful to clean a stable.

Augias had, according to the tale of antiquity, three thousand oxen in his stables, which had not been cleansed for thirty years, so that, at last, it seemed almost impossible to clear them from the prodigious accumulation.

Hercules, at the command of Eurystheus, undertook this employment, and the enormous task was to be performed in the space of a few days. Augias, who himself doubted the possibility of the performance, promised Hercules the tenth part of his herds as a reward. By turning the course of the river Alpheus through the stables, the hero performed in one day a task, the accom-

plishment of which every one had thought impossible. After the work was done, Augias withheld the promised reward. The son of Alcmene, enraged at this faithlessness, made war upon him, and, having conquered and killed him, proclaimed Phyleus, his son, who was possessed of nobler sentiments than his father, his successor upon the throne.

Out of the treasures which he had gained in this war, he built a temple in honour of the Olympian Jupiter, and renewed the Olympic games.

8th. *The Cretan bull.*—Neptune, being angry at the inhabitants of Crete, because they were deficient in their veneration for him, sent a furious bull into their island, which exhaled fire from his nostrils, and, as no one would venture to approach him, wasted the country.

Scarcely had Eurystheus heard of this, ere he imposed on Hercules the new task of catching this beast alive. Hercules, whose bodily strength measured itself, as it were, with the whole animal world, subdued the bull sent by Neptune, and carried him on his shoulders to Mycene.

9th. *The horses of Diomedes.*—Diomedes, a king of Thrace, and a son of Mars, had in his possession four horses vomiting fire, which were fed by him with human flesh. All strangers who fell into the hands of this barbarian, were thrown to his horses, to be torn and devoured by them.

The report of this cruelty having spread everywhere, Eurystheus commanded Hercules to fetch him the fire-breathing steeds. The hero obeyed, overpowered Diomedes, and made him suffer the just punishment of his cruelty, by throwing him to the carnivorous beasts.

Ill treatment of strangers is, in the fictions of the ancients, with whom the rights of hospitality were sacred above all earthly considerations, the surest mark of malicious tyranny and injustice, and the more so in proportion as it assumes the garb of cruelty. The tyrants

who could torment strangers, or kill them, were regarded as monsters, and it was the task of the divine heroes to exterminate them from the earth.

The representation of the horses of Diomedes is found upon ancient monuments of art, as they are standing before a manger, in which the body of a human being lies extended. The cruel master of the horses stands by, feeding his eyes, as it were, on the sight.

10th. *The triple-bodied Geryon.*—Geryon, the savage monarch of three islands, situated in the dusky west of the ancient world, who was furnished with three bodies, has also been already mentioned in the pedigree of the monsters. Chrysaor, who rose from the blood of the killed Medusa, and Callirrhoe, a daughter of Oceanus, were the parents of the treble-bodied giant, Geryon, and Echidna. The latter, a monster, upward nymph, and below dragon, produced the triple-headed dog Cerberus, the two-headed dog Orthrus, the Lernæan hydra, the fire-vomiting Chimæra, and the Sphinx.

The two-headed dog Orthrus, together with the herdsman Eurytion, tended the herds of Geryon, whose dwelling fiction places in the remotest shores of the ocean. A monster was in possession of what was considered, in the times of antiquity, as the greatest treasure, and the fame of Geryon's sleek herds had spread so far, as to induce Eurystheus to impose upon Hercules the commission of leading away those herds from their present pasture, and bringing them, as a warlike treasure, from the remotest bounds of the earth to Mycene.

Hercules made his way over mountains and rocks, performing on this distant expedition many other great exploits. After having overcome the dog Orthrus, as well as Eurytion, the herdsman, he took possession of Geryon's oxen, and when the triple-bodied monster himself then rushed upon him, he slew him likewise with his club.

11th. *The golden apples of the Hesperides.*—The greatest treasure which was transferred by imagination

to the widest distance, and which was thought to be altogether unattainable, were the golden apples in the gardens of the Hesperides, on the shores of the Atlantic. They were watched by a dragon, which also was one of the monsters that descended from Phorcys and Ceto.

The Hesperides themselves were daughters of Night, that is to say, their origin and existence are veiled in darkness. Their names were Ægle, Erythia, and Arethusa. To bring their golden fruits to Eurystheus, in Greece, was the eleventh task which Hercules had to accomplish, in obedience to a foreign command.

He killed the dragon, after he had thrown him into a deep sleep by a certain potion which he gave him, and gathered the golden fruit, nearly at the end of his career.

In the representations of Hercules, the tree which bore the golden fruit is also to be seen; the dragon coils itself around it, and Hercules stands before him, with the cup that contained the somniferous potion. The Hesperides stand by, lamenting the loss of their treasure, which they had heretofore so carefully preserved.

12th. *Cerberus, the watch-dog of Orcus.*—Hercules had now given eleven proofs of the strength and agility of his body, as well as of the magnanimity of his soul; the last only now remained.

Not enough that he had conquered the monsters in the higher world, Eurystheus commanded him to descend into the world of shadows, and to drag the triple-headed dog Cerberus, that watched the gate of Pluto, to the light of day. Thus the trials of the hero are to be terminated by the most difficult and dangerous of all: to brave death himself, even in his own dominion, to descend into the open gulf that leads to his territories, and to contend, in direful fight, with the very king of terrors.

Before Hercules went on his way to the lower world, he had become initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, to be, as it were, prepared for every event, whether life or death: he then boldly entered the wide cavern at the

promontory of Tænarus, which led to the abodes of the shades. He compelled Charon to row him over the Styx. When reaching the other shore, he first beheld the triple-headed monster, Cerberus, and then, chained to a rock, two well-known heroes, Theseus and Pirithous, who had ventured to descend into Orcus, with the intention of delivering Proserpine, the queen of the dead, from Pluto's dwelling. They were overpowered, fastened to a huge rock, and doomed never to behold again the light of the sun.

Hercules nevertheless succeeded in delivering Theseus. Fiction says, that, when the hero was pursuing Cerberus, whose fierceness, after a desperate struggle, had been broken, and who was now flying with anxious wailings to the palace of Pluto, the chaplet of mallow leaves, which he wore on his head, grew black. Hercules fought with Pluto himself; seized upon the triple-headed watch-dog of his dominion; loosened Theseus' bands, and hastened out of the land of terrors. He had also endeavoured to free Pirithous from his fetters, but in vain, for Pluto defended his prey with his whole power.

Hercules brought Cerberus in triumph to the upper world, where from the slaver of the dog a venomous root grew up. The terrified Eurystheus could not bear the sight of the monster, and Hercules, having kept him tamed between his knees, delivered him from the pain of beholding the light of day. The black monster sunk back into the lower world, to resume again his watch at its gates.

These were the proofs which Hercules gave of his invincible courage, his strength, his perseverance, and patient submission to the hard decrees of fate, in performing the most difficult tasks at the command of another. But there are still other deeds of valour, not less glorious, and perhaps of higher merit, which he voluntarily achieved.

DEEDS WHICH WERE PERFORMED BY HERCULES, NOT AT THE COMMAND OF ANOTHER.

1. *The rescue of Hesoine.*—Hercules was a companion of the Argonauts, in their expedition to Colchis; but he separated himself from the rest, going on shore near the city of Troy, to seek for Hylas, his friend, who had left the ship for water, and had not returned. The Naiades had ravished the handsome youth, having drawn him into the well; and in vain was the cry of the hero: Hylas! Hylas! The whole shore re-echoed the name of Hylas, but Hylas himself did not return.

When Hercules saw that all his endeavours in search of his beloved friend were fruitless, he proceeded on his way to Troy, where, at that time, Laomedon was king, who, when Neptune and Apollo had condescended, in human shape, to build the walls round the city, had cheated them of their wages. His crime did not remain long unpunished. The ruler of the waves threatened ruin to the city of Troy by an inundation, and could not, according to the sentence of the oracle, be reconciled, unless Laomedon would sacrifice his daughter, Hesione. Like Andromeda, in a former period, she also was fastened to a rock on the sea-shore, to become the prey of a sea-monster, when Hercules happened to arrive there, and behold the mournful spectacle.

He instantly offered to deliver Hesione from the cruel death which awaited her; but, not so generous and tender as Perseus, he required a valuable pair of horses that belonged to Laomedon for his reward, a demand to which the father of the unfortunate victim readily agreed. But a man, who had already cheated the gods, felt no scruples of conscience in deceiving Hercules too. And so it happened. When Laomedon saw his daughter at liberty, he refused her deliverer the promised horses. Hercules, therefore, made an assault upon the gates of his residence, took the city, and slew the false

and treacherous king. Telamon, the companion of Hercules, who had first ascended the walls, was rewarded with the hand of Hesione, to whom he moreover granted the life of one among the prisoners. Hesione chose her brother Podarces, who afterward called himself Priam, and who lived to see the future, melancholy fate of Troy, together with the entire ruin of his royal house, then already determined by the decree of fate.

2d. *The victory over Antæus, Busiris, and Cacus.*—When Hercules, on his expedition to the west, arrived in Libya, he met with the giant Antæus, who, for his cruelty to strangers, was a monster that deserved to be exterminated from the earth by a powerful arm.

Antæus forced all the strangers who came within his reach to wrestle with him, and after having conquered them, he strangled them, and set up their skulls and bones around his dwelling, as so many trophies. He was a son of the Earth, and had been, until the arrival of Hercules, invincible, acquiring new strength by contact with his mother, as often as he was cast down to the ground. Hercules, having long tried his strength on him without success, at last became aware of his rising with renewed force and spirit, whenever he had brought him to the ground. He therefore raised him up, in his mighty arms, as high as he could in the air, and then pressed and choked him till Antæus was exhausted and breathed his last.

In this situation, holding his foe above the ground, Hercules is often found represented upon ancient monuments.

Busiris was a cruel king in Egypt, who, in company with his two sons, took pleasure in committing every species of violence against strangers. For Hercules, who came this way, a similar fate was designed, but he slew both Busiris and his sons, thus rendering the road safe for the traveller.

When Hercules, with Geryon's oxen, which he was

driving from the remote shores of the ocean to Greece, had arrived in that region where, on the Aventine Mount, near the Tiber, Rome was afterwards built, he fell asleep. The monster Cacus, belching out flames of fire, who made it his business to rob travellers, had no sooner perceived it, than he issued from his cavern on the Aventine Mount, dragging the oxen one after another, by their tails, into his cavern, in order to deceive the searching driver by the tracks appearing backward. When Hercules awoke and missed the stolen oxen, he was misled by the tracks, and after a long and unsuccessful search he was about to proceed on his way, when the lowing of his oxen out of the cavern of Cacus struck his ear. He soon convinced himself that Cacus was the thief, engaged in battle with him, and by his club stretched him dead on the ground.

It was here that Carmenta, the mother of Evander, who was reigning over that country, presaged the apotheosis of Hercules, and here, in his life time, was the first altar erected to him.

The representations of Hercules sleeping near his herds, while Cacus drags the oxen backward into his cavern, is still to be found upon gems.

3d. *The deliverance of Alceste from Orcus.*—Hercules, who destroyed the tyrants that treated strangers with cruelty, was himself sensible of the benefit of hospitality, showing this sensibility in a noble manner toward King Admetus, in Thessaly.

Admetus was married to Alceste, a daugher of King Pelias. He fell sick, and, according to the oracle, his life could not be saved, unless some one should be found who would voluntarily devote himself to death in his stead. Alceste secretly offered herself to the gods as a victim for her husband. She, in her turn, now fell sick, and in proportion as her illness increased, her husband's health was restored. She had died, when Her-

cules entered as a guest the hospitable mansion of Admetus.

The rights of hospitality were so sacred with the king as to induce him at first to conceal his mourning in the presence of Hercules; but when the latter heard of Alceste's tragical end, he promised his friend to bring back his beloved wife from Orcus, cost what it would.

And now Hercules embraced with his mighty arms even death, and held him fast until he had restored to his friend the companion of his bosom; and grief was changed into new wedding-joys and delightful conversations.

4th. *The deliverance of Prometheus from his sufferings.*—In Hercules humanity had risen, as it were, to the top of her glory, as formerly in Prometheus she had sunk to the depth of humiliation. The torments of this sufferer, in whose bowels the vulture had been gnawing for centuries, now approached their termination: Hercules was to become his deliverer.

Jupiter himself gave his consent to his deliverance, after Prometheus had revealed to him the prophecy, which had long been concealed; that Thetis should bear a son, who would be mightier than his father.

Through this revelation the power of Jupiter was a second time saved from the superiority of a mightier one by the former and father of men, the Thunderer having entertained thoughts of marrying Thetis.

Hercules killed the vulture by shooting him with his bow, and the bands with which Prometheus had been fastened to the rock, fell off from his limbs.

5th. *The erection of the pillars at the straits between Europe and Africa.*—The fictions of the deeds of Hercules become at last colossean, losing themselves in the idea of a power, which neither men nor gods are able to resist.

When Apollo refused giving an oracle to the hero, he took away Pythia's golden tripod, until the god had complied with his demand. The celestials complain

of him, that once he wounded even Juno, and that he did not spare Pluto with his arrows.

When on his expedition to the west, the sun one day emitted too vehement a heat, he drew his bow and shot at the driver of the chariot, who endeavoured to reconcile him by presenting him with a golden drinking-cup. On Neptune's sending a storm, he aimed at him with his arrows, and the king of the waters, to calm the hero's wrath, stilled the winds; and the waves bore on their surface that drinking vessel of gold, which, from its immense size, was used by Hercules as a bark, without any apprehension of its sinking, since both the floods and their ruler were submissive to him.

Having, on his expedition to the west, reached the remotest ends of the earth, he broke through the isthmus between Europe and Africa, thus uniting the Atlantic ocean with the Mediterranean sea. There he erected, as a token of the exploits which he had performed, and as a mark of the termination of his wanderings, two pillars upon the opposite mountains, Calpe and Abyla, which posterity called the pillars of Hercules. It was impossible for imagination to soar higher than in these pictures; for where, according to the ideas of the ancients, earth herself has her bounds, where the sun sinks into the sea, there only and no where else, was the term of the heroic course of Hercules. Only one stroke is yet wanting in the colossean picture. It is this: he who delivered Prometheus from his long sufferings, released also Atlas, for a time, from the burthen that eternally presses on his shoulders, himself taking the sky on his back, and thus procuring for the son of Japetus a temporary rest.

In this posture, bearing the celestial globe upon his shoulders, Hercules is represented on some ancient monuments.

HERCULES' MARRIAGES, HIS FOIBLES AND CRIMES.

The foregoing tales contain the most eminent of Hercules' exploits. In addition to those fictions already mentioned, the ancients ascribe to him many more, every undertaking or performance, for which perseverance, heroism, and strength, are requisite, easily associating itself with that name which at once denoted whatever of godlike displays itself on earth in bodily strength and valour.

If, however, in any divine or heroic being the idea of corporal strength and undaunted courage predominates, it certainly is in the person of Hercules. Always indefatigably pursuing some object, regardless of what is standing or sinking around him, he represents as it were in himself, humanity awakened from her first slumbers, feeling herself in her entire strength, and acting without any idle deliberation.

The idea of a hero, in the mind of the ancients, was generally not connected with that of a sage. Even in the person of Ulysses wisdom assumes the garb of craftiness, and in that of Nestor heroism is already lamed by old age. With the heroes much light is always mingled with much shade, and the common saying, founded upon what is constantly observed, 'the greater the man, the greater his shadow,' finds with them its proper application. Hercules must pay the penalty of his strength and invincible courage by many foibles, errours, and even crimes.

In his different marriages and amours, he found his misfortunes, and at last a painful death.

The first marriage which he entered into was with the daughter of Creon, prince of Thebes, Megara, who was given to him by her father out of gratitude for having freed the city from a burthensome tribute, which it had been obliged to pay to the Orchomenians. After Megara had presented him with four sons, he is said to

have been driven distracted by Juno, and in a fit of fury to have slain the mother, with the children, in whose memory obsequies were afterwards celebrated at Thebes every year.

In order to expiate this horrible deed, although it was not perpetrated designedly, Hercules submitted with the more readiness to the labours imposed upon him by Eurystheus; but when he had nearly completed his tasks, he was enchained by a new love, and married again, notwithstanding the tragical end of his first nuptials.

Upon one of his expeditions he came to King Oeneus, at Calydon, in Ætolia, where he saw the beautiful Dejanira, the royal daughter, who was the affianced bride of the river-god, Achelous. Hercules engaged in battle with him, and Dejanira was the prize of his victory. The hero then proceeded on his way, accompanied by his wife. When they arrived at the river Euenus, on the banks of which Nessus, the Centaur, had his dwelling, Hercules committed to him the charge of carrying Dejanira on his back through the river. The Centaur complied the more willingly with the request of one, in whose mouth a request amounted to a command, because he harboured the secret intention of depriving Hercules of his wife. Accordingly, when he had brought his fair burthen to the other bank of the river, he gallopped off with Dejanira; but upon her cries for assistance, Hercules bending his bow, sent through the faithless Centaur one of those arrows which had been dipped in the poisonous blood of the Lernæan hydra. Nessus, brooding revenge at the very moment of his death, handed to Dejanira a flask, filled with his blood, beseeching her to keep it as a precious gift, by means of which she could secure to herself the attachment of her husband, as well as banish every other love from his breast, by rubbing the blood on the garment which he wore next his body.

Hercules, pursuing his adventures, was obliged to separate himself, from time to time, from Dejanira. On

one occasion his absence was unusually long; he was rambling in foreign regions, without giving her any intelligence of himself. A new love, which afterwards afflicted him deeper than any event of his life, because it misled him to an act of injustice, kept him in bonds. Hercules, before his marriage with Dejanira, had seen Iole, the daughter of King Eurytus, who reigned over Œchalia, in Eubœa, and was conquered by her charms. He sued for her hand from her father, but met with a refusal; whereupon he left the house of his host in anger, and meditated revenge. And soon after, when Iphitus, the son of Eurytus, came to Hercules in quest of his strayed mares, which the hero himself kept concealed, under the pretext of showing him his mares, Hercules conducted the son of his host to the rocky walls of Tiryns, and suddenly pitched him from the steep height.

By this deed Hercules stained his glory, and was compelled by the command of the gods to atone for it in a humiliating manner. He must suffer himself to be sold as a slave to the voluptuous Queen Omphale, in Lydia, at whose command he was obliged to do female work.

Plastic art represents Omphale wearing the skin of the Nemæan lion round her shoulders, and holding the club in her hand, while Hercules is seen in a female dress, sitting at the distaff and spinning. The hero, who had already completed his heroic course, must nevertheless become sensible of the lot of mortals, before he should go to take his seat in the assembly of the celestials, sinking down from his greatness in proportion to the height of his former elevation.

The fixed period of his servitude in Lydia having expired, Hercules made war upon Eurytus, because of his having refused him his daughter, and carrying the city of Œchalia by assault, he destroyed it, slew the king himself, and sent his daughter Iole as a slave to his wife Dejanira.

Dejanira received Iole with kindness. Understanding, however, this very captive to be her rival, she thought it time to make use of the gift of Nessus. Accordingly, she took the long preserved blood of the Centaur, and having rubbed with it a splendid tunic, she sent it to her husband by her servant Lichas, with the request, not to wear the garment until he should have occasion to show himself, finely dressed, to the immortals, on a sacred festival, when sacrifices were to be offered.

HERCULES' LAST SUFFERINGS, AND HIS APOTHEOSIS.

Long ago had Hercules received the oracle, that his death was not to be apprehended from a living being, but from a dead one. The fulfilment of this prediction was now drawing nigh.

After his victory over Eurytus, Hercules had erected an altar to Jupiter upon the promontory of Cenæum, in Eubœa, and was about to kill the victims, when Lichas appeared, bringing him Dejanira's present. The hero was the more rejoiced at the gift, because it arrived at so seasonable a time. Instantly arraying himself in the costly attire, he presented a hecatomb to the immortals, and made the flames blaze from the altars to the sky. Suddenly his newly received tunic adhered to his body as if glued to it, and convulsions seized all his limbs. It was the poison of the hydra, mingled with the blood of Nessus, which had penetrated into his body, and was now consuming the very marrow of his bones.

Calling the unfortunate Lichas, who had brought him the garment, while unspeakable pain raged in his bowels, he hurled him against a rock with such force that his skull and his bones were crushed to pieces. In the midst of his torments, the hero was brought to the city of Trachinia, in Thessaly. The unhappy Dejanira had no sooner heard of the dreadful effect of her present, than she put an end to her life.

Hyllus, the son of Hercules and Dejanira, assisting his father in his torments, brought him at his command to mount Œta, where Hercules had resolved to put an end to his sufferings, by a voluntary death. On mount Œta a pile of wood was erected and kindled: it was the funeral pile of Hercules. After having recommended to his son Hyllus his much loved Iole, and given to Philoctetes, who was the son of Pœas, and his faithful companion, his bow and arrows as an inheritance, the hero ascended his fatal death-bed. There, surrounded by the blazing flames, his face became resplendent. Hercules had finished the sufferings of humanity, and atoned for her foibles; his mortal covering, subjected to pains and distresses, fell off from him; his shade went down to Orcus, but he himself rose up to Olympus, into the assembly of the immortals. Juno was reconciled, and Hebe, the goddess of eternal youth, became, according to the decree of fate, the spouse of the new deity.

The richness of Hercules' history is the reason that we find the hero represented in many different attitudes. In the German cabinet already mentioned, two antique gems are preserved, the one of which represents him as a youth, in the act of choking the Nemæan lion. The other portrays him as he is resting from his labours after having completed his course. He is sitting as if in profound meditation, drawing unconsciously, as it were, with his right hand a part of his lion skin round his thigh, and leaning with his left upon his club; before him an old, withered olive-trunk, with a new, flourishing shoot, is to be seen, from which his bow and quiver are suspended.

CASTOR AND POLLUX.

Œbalus, a king of Lacedæmon, sprung from a scion of the old stem of Inachus, was the father of Tyndarus, who succeeded him in the government, and married Leda, a daughter of Thestius, king of Ætolia.

The beauty of Leda attracted the eyes of Jupiter. Descending from his Olympian seat, under the disguise of a swan, he saw her on the shores of the river Eurotas; or rather, transformed into the shape of that bird, he took refuge in her lap, while Venus was pursuing him in the form of an eagle.

Leda, having become pregnant both by Jupiter and Tyndarus, brought forth two eggs, the one of which contained Castor and Pollux, and the other Clytemnestra and Helena. Pollux and Helena were the children of Jupiter, Castor and Clytemnestra of Tyndarus. The former were immortal, the latter mortal.

Notwithstanding their different descent, Castor and Pollux were inseparable, loving one another as dear brothers and friends. Both were valiant, and glowed with heroic fire, and both were skilled in every bodily exercise; with this difference only, that Castor was pre-eminent in the art of riding and managing horses, and Pollux in that of wrestling.

Castor and Pollux were contemporaries of the most renowned heroes, and accompanied the Argonauts on their expedition to Colchis. On their way thither Pollux slew in single combat Amycus, a son of Neptune, who was accustomed to challenge arrogantly every stranger to a fight with clubs. It was also during this voyage, that in the midst of a dreadful storm, two flames were seen hovering over the heads of Castor and Pollux, whereupon the storm abated; and in remembrance of this event, fires, whenever they appeared to seamen in boisterous weather, were called Castor and Pollux, and considered as a sure sign of help and safety.

Nay, the Dioscuri, or twin-sons of Jupiter, under which name Castor and Pollux are commonly designated, were revered above all other deities as benign beings, present to those who were in danger and necessity, and ready to aid them; and they were addressed in every emergency, on land as well as at sea, by the prayers of such as stood in need of assistance.

After their return from the expedition to Colchis, they were informed, that during their absence Theseus had ravished their sister Helena, and delivered her to the custody and care of his mother, Æthra, in Aphidnæ. Castor and Pollux conquered the city, delivered their sister, and took with them Theseus' mother as a prisoner, without committing, however, any violence in the besieged city, or in the whole territory of Attica; and this forbearing benignity, which attends the heroic deeds of the Dioscuri, is probably the chief reason why mortal men afterwards looked up to them with trust and confidence, as to friendly, assisting genii.

The fidelity, likewise, with which this inseparable pair of brothers assisted one another in dangers, rendered the two divine heroes an object of love and veneration to mankind; and their fraternal friendship is indeed one of the most beautiful circumstances which fiction has interwoven into the records of the splendid heroic age.

When Castor and Pollux sued for the daughters of Leucippus, Phœbe and Ilaira, each of them was obliged to win his bride by a combat with a rival, Castor with Lynceus, and Pollux with Idas, the sons of Aphareus. Castor, not being immortal, was conquered and slain by Lynceus. Although Pollux avenged his brother's death on Lynceus, and fought with Idas also, until the latter was killed by a flash of lightning, he could not awaken his beloved brother from death. He then implored Jupiter either to deprive him also of life, or to allow him to share his immortality with his brother. Jupiter granted the pious prayer, and Pollux descended to his brother one day in the abode of the shades, in order to enjoy life with him on the next, in the light of the sky.

Human love and veneration often dedicated temples and altars to the Dioscuri. Imagination frequently presented them to mortals, when in imminent dangers. They then appeared in the form of two youths, sitting

on white horses, arrayed in shining armour, and bearing little flames, or stars, upon their heads.

And thus they were commonly represented in works of art, either riding along side of each other, or standing near one another, their spears bent, the stars sparkling on their heads, and each of them holding a horse by the bridle.

JASON.

Jason was a shoot of the heroic stem of Æolus, but not the son of a god. Juno, while she persecuted the sons of Jupiter, took him under her particular protection.

Æolus, Deucalion's grandson, who reigned in Thessaly, was the father of Salmoneus, Sisyphus, Athamas, and Cretheus. Salmoneus was killed by Jupiter's lightning; Sisyphus atoned in the lower world for the tyrannical exercise of his power while on earth, and Athamas died in a state of madness.

Tyro, a daughter of Salmoneus, became the mother of Pelias and Neleus, sons of Neptune. Marrying afterwards her father's brother, Cretheus, she gave him a son called Æson, who succeeded his father on the throne, and was the parent of Jason, the godlike hero, whose mother's name was Alcimede.

Æson was dethroned by his brother Pelias, but was not obliged to fly from the city of Iolcos, which was the seat of the Thessalian kings. Of young Jason, however, Pelias was anxious to rid himself, considering him as a member of the legitimate royal family, who might become dangerous to him. The parents of the child, Æson and Alcimede, perceiving the tyrant's intention, spread the rumour, that Jason was sick, and soon after, that he had died, while his mother brought him to mount Pelion, where the wise Centaur Chiron, well versed in every science, devoted himself to the education of the young hero in his lonely grotto.

When Jason had reached the years of puberty, and

manful courage began to awaken in his breast, following the advice of an oracle, he went, wearing the skin of a panther round his shoulders, and armed with two darts, to the court of Pelias, at Iolcos.

Pelias had received an oracle, putting him on his guard against a person, who would one day appear before him with only one sandal, having his other foot bare. When Jason, on his way to Iolcos, was going to pass the river Anaurus, Juno appeared to him in the shape of an old woman, entreating him to carry her through the river. Jason readily complied with her request, but on going with his burthen through the water, he lost one of his sandals in the mud, and thus presented himself with only one before the palace of Pelias, who, on perceiving him, recollected, with terror and consternation, the sentence of the oracle.

When the stranger was required to tell who he was, Jason demanded, before all the people, the royal crown, which the usurper had seized from the head of his father, Æson. "The revenues of the kingdom," added he, "thou mayest keep and enjoy, but of the supreme authority thou must divest thyself!"*

Pelias, being enabled by this proposal to penetrate the soul of the young hero, did not doubt that he might for the present avert the storm which was hovering over his head, and remove the lion by offering him as a bait the enticing charm of an extraordinary as well as glorious deed. He therefore feigned a willingness to restore the royal crown to its rightful possessor, or his family, provided the manes of Phryxus, another descendant of Æolus, who had found an untimely death in Colchis, were propitiated, and that golden fleece recovered which he had deposited there.

This Phryxus, who died in Colchis, was a son of Athamas, and a grandson of Æolus. Athamas, king of Bœotia, had by his first wife, Nephele, two children,

* Apollon. Rhod. Argon. I. 1, ss.

Phryxus and Helle; but after Nephele's death he married Ino, a daughter of Cadmus, who, with the hatred of a jealous step-mother, persecuted those two children, and even resolved to deprive them of life. The shade of Nephele appeared to her children, apprising them of the danger they were in of becoming victims of Ino's hatred, unless they should seek their safety in instant flight; and that for this purpose a ram, with a golden fleece, stood ready, which, at the command of the gods, should bear them on his back over the lands and through the sea.

Phryxus and Helle mounted the ram, which carried them toward the east to the distant country of Colchis, where Æetes, whose father was the sun, then reigned. But they were not both destined to reach that country; for, on their journey, Helle, the sister, fell from the back of the animal into the sea, and was drowned. That part of the sea which proved so fatal to her, derives its name from her, and is called the Hellespont, even to this very day. Her brother Phryxus arrived safely at Colchis, where he killed the ram that had borne him thither, suspending its skin, or the golden fleece, as a sacred token, in a holy grove. He himself married the daughter of King Æetes, but soon died in the foreign land.

The report of the golden fleece, which had spread over the whole earth, had for a long time excited the desire of every one, who wished to gain something particularly excellent. It was in the distant east, what the golden fruits of the Hesperides were in the west—a treasure worthy of the greatest toils, and pains, and perils. The image of the ram, and the richly covered ram-skin, generally implies with the ancients the idea of *wealth;* and this probably gave rise to the fiction of the golden fleece, involving the idea of riches and treasures, as well as the means of gaining them.

The miraculous, which was intermingled with the tales of the golden fleece, and the adventures that were

connected with an expedition to a far distant land, were most alluring calls on the heroes of yore, to try their courage, as well as their fortune. No sooner did the words of Pelias touch the ear of Jason, than his ardour to perform the glorious deed was enflamed, and pledging his word to bring the treasure, or never to return, he invited the most renowned heroes of Greece to embark with him in the bold adventure.

THE EXPEDITION OF THE ARGONAUTS.

For making the voyage to Colchis, a ship was built of pines cut from mount Pelion, which, although larger than any other constructed before that time, was light and easy in moving, for which reason she was called Argo, i. e. the *swift-sailing*. From her name, those who were to embark in her were called Argonauts.

The mast of the Argo had been taken from the forest of Dodona, where the oaks were endowed with the power of uttering predictions, and therefore the ship was considered as an animated being, in concord with fate, and to which a man might commit himself with the more confidence. Among the number of heroes who accompanied Jason, the following names are most conspicuous:

HERCULES, the son of Jupiter,
CASTOR and POLLUX, the Dioscuri,
CALAIS and ZETES, the sons of Boreas,
PELEUS, the father of Achilles,
ADMETUS, the husband of Alceste,
NELEUS, the father of Nestor,
MELEAGER, the Calydonian,
ORPHEUS, the divine bard of Thrace,
TELAMON, the father of Ajax,
MENŒTIUS, the father of Patroclus,
LYNCEUS, the son of Aphareus,
THESEUS, the Athenian, and his friend
PIRITHOUS, the Lapithæan.

The fathers of the most renowned heroes who shone in the Trojan war, are in part still in youthful vigour, at the time of the voyage to Colchis. Here a race of heroes advances, to wring with united force a precious treasure from the hands of barbarians; afterwards a second heroic race unites to avenge the robbery of beauty by the destruction of Troy.

With favourable wind the Argo sailed out of the harbour of Iolcos. Orpheus struck his harp, and his song animated the spirit of his companions in threatening dangers; the piercing eye of Lynceus penetrated the most distant regions, and the experienced pilot, Tiphys, managed the helm with skilful hand. The voyage had commenced under favourable auspices, and for a time all things had gone on successfully, when suddenly a dreadful storm befell the adventurers, and forced them to seek refuge in the harbour of Lemnos.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that while the heroes were struggling against the raging elements, several of them made a vow to consecrate themselves by becoming initiated in the Samothracian mysteries; just as Hercules, when he was about to enter on the most dangerous enterprize, by descending into Orcus, was first initiated into those of Eleusis.

At Lemnos a greater danger threatened the Argonauts than even the storm had caused, by which they had been driven thither: the beauty and caresses of the Lemnian women kept the heroes in bonds, protracting for a considerable time their voyage to Colchis.

Not long before the arrival of the Argonauts at Lemnos, the female inhabitants had murdered all the males of the island, except King Thoas, whose daughter, Hypsipyle, had spared her father's life. The anger of Venus, whom the Lemnian women had not sufficiently honoured, was the occasion of this atrocious deed. For the angry goddess infused into the men of Lemnos, who were at that time warring against the Thracians, an invincible dislike to their wives, and, at the same time, an

inclination toward the female slaves who had become their prisoners in the Thracian war. Such an insult the women of Lemnos could not bear; they conspired, rose in one night upon their sleeping husbands, fathers, and brothers, and murdered them all. Those who conducted the war in Thrace were saved by their absence.

When the Argonauts were landing at Lemnos, they were at first opposed by the women, who mistook them for the Lemnians returning from Thrace to avenge the death of their fellow-citizens. But as soon as they perceived their error, they received the strangers with open arms, and they remained on the island two years.

From Lemnos the heroes sailed to Samothrace, where they were inspired with new courage by their initiation into the mysteries. On their landing near Troas they were abandoned by Hercules, who, with Telamon, went into the country in quest of Hylas. In the city of Cyzicus, on the descent of mount Dindymus, where the Argonauts next landed, they were hospitably received by the king, who bore the same name as his city, and dismissed by him with presents. But the night after their departure, when the ship was forced back into the harbour by a storm, the heroes were mistaken for enemies by King Cyzicus, and attacked by him in a hostile manner. In this fight Jason had the misfortune to kill their kind and friendly host; and to atone for this deed, although unintentional, he brought offerings on mount Dindymus to the mother of the gods, and built a temple there to her honour.

The Argonauts then proceeding on their course, and steering always towards the east, arrived in Bebrycia, where the royal crown was worn by that Amycus who challenged every stranger to fight him with clubs, and who was vanquished and slain in the combat by Pollux.

On their farther course the bold navigators were driven near the coasts of Thrace by a storm, and compelled to enter the harbour of Salmydessus, where the

prophesying Phineus reigned, who had been punished with blindness by the immortals, and, to complete his misery, was perpetually vexed by the daughters of Thaumas, the direful Harpies. Phineus, who had delivered up his own two sons, the children of his first wife, a daughter of Boreas, to the hatred of their stepmother, Idæa, and, at her calumnious instigation, had even deprived them of the light of their eyes, was obliged to expiate his crime by his own blindness, while the Harpies, those ghastly birds of prey, with maiden faces, seized upon his food, or ruined and defiled whatever he was about to partake of.

Phineus, who was deprived of the external light, but with his mental eyes anticipated the future, gave to the Argonauts prudent advice concerning their further voyage, and furnished them also with a guide to lead them through the Cyanean rocks, or Symplegades, the dangerous passage of which now awaited the bold navigators. Grateful for these services, the winged sons of Boreas, Calais and Zetes, by their swords affrighted the Harpies from Phineus' table, pursuing them as far as the Strophades, where, at the command of the gods, they stopped their pursuit, and returned to their companions. From this return, (στρεφω,) those islands derived their name.

The Cyaneæ, or Symplegades, through which the Argonauts were obliged to sail, were two immense rocks, immediately opposite to each other, at the entrance into the Black Sea, and which seemed, according to the different directions in which they were approached, to open and then again to close. This phenomenon gave rise to the ancient fiction, that the rocks really opened and closed like a pair of scissors, crushing every thing that happened to come between them, when they were moving together. Quite natural, therefore, is also the subsequent fiction, that, after the Argonauts had successfully ventured on the passage, and the optical illusion was thus discovered, Neptune had fixed the rocks immoveable.

After having fortunately passed the Symplegades, the heroes next landed in the territory of Lycus, who, being by birth a Greek, received the strangers from his native land with open arms. Here the pilot, Tiphys, died, and his place was succeeded by Ancæus, who happily conducted at last the sacred Argo, after having long sustained the beating of the briny flood, and experienced many a storm, into the longed for harbour of Colchis.

It was here, however, that the greatest danger awaited the leader of the whole expedition, Jason; a danger which could hardly be avoided without assistance from above.

King Æetes received the strangers not in a hostile, or even unfriendly manner; but he prescribed to Jason, who demanded the restitution of the golden fleece, such conditions as he himself thought impossible to be complied with; for to those dangers which he had planned, the most undaunted hero must necessarily succumb.

In order to gain the golden fleece, Jason was, in the first place, to put two fire-exhaling bulls, sacred to Vulcan, to an adamantine plough-share, and to break up with them four acres of land, consecrated to Mars, that had never been ploughed before. Then he was to sow the dragon-teeth of Cadmus, which yet remained in the possession of Æetes, in the newly ploughed furrows, and the armed warriors who should immediately arise out of the dreadful seed, he must kill to the last man. This done, he was at last to fight with the dragon that watched the golden fleece, and dispatch him likewise.

Medea, a daughter of Æetes, skilled in charms and witchcraft, had scarcely beheld Jason, when, through the influence and disposal of the gods, a tender affection for the hero was raised in her bosom, which soon kindled a flame of the most violent passion.

Jason went to the temple of Hecate, to supplicate the mighty goddess for protection, and there Medea met him. She disclosed her love to him, promising, at the

same time, her assistance in the dangers which threatened him, and her powerful help in accomplishing his glorious undertaking, if he should swear fidelity to her. Jason complied, and Medea, reciprocating the oath, rendered the hero invincible by means of her magical incantations. She gave him a stone, which he was to cast among the warriors that should spring up from the dragon-teeth, and also herbs, and a potion for lulling asleep the dragon that watched the golden fleece.

On the following day Jason, surrounded by his companions, appeared on the field of Mars, in the presence of the king and a multitude of the people; the fire-breathing bulls were about to be set free, and the hearts of the assembled multitude were chilled with awe and expectation; a deadly silence reigned, and all eyes were anxiously turned upon the hero, who alone expected quietly his fire-vomiting foes. The bulls rushed upon him fierce and snorting; but the power of charming with which Medea had armed him, suddenly made them tame and obedient: without reluctance they bent their necks under the yoke, suffering Jason to put them to the plough, and quietly made the furrows, into which he sowed the dragon-teeth. No sooner were they scattered, than a harvest of armed warriors sprang from the ground, all of them turning their swords against Jason. The hero then following the directions received by Medea, flung the enchanted pebble, which she had given him for that purpose, into the midst of the thronged crowd of his enemies; and behold, the stone had the power of troubling their senses, as well as of hardening their hearts, making them rise furiously against one another, until the ground from which they had just sprung up, was covered with their slain bodies. Before the king and people could recover from the utter astonishment into which this spectacle had thrown them, Jason was already hastening towards the grim guardian of the fleece, to lull him asleep. He succeeded, and afterwards killed the monster, and triumphantly held in

his right hand the golden fleece. The conqueror returned, together with his companions, to his ship, and Medea, leaving in nightly silence her father's house, to follow her lover, went also on board the Argo, which set sail that very night.

Æetes, soon roused by the discovered flight of his daughter, went himself with his ships in pursuit of the swift-sailing Argo. Near the mouth of the river Danube, Medea descried the sails of her father, and to save herself as well as her lover from the impending danger, she adopted a measure both cruel and desperate. She had taken along with her her little brother, Absyrtus, as a kind of hostage, and in the present emergency, seeing no other means of safety, she killed and cut him in pieces, planting his head and hands upon a high rock, and scattering the rest of his members on the shore, with the view of retarding her father's pursuit, or of inducing him to desist from it altogether by the shocking sight, and by collecting together the child's members. In order to mark this horrid deed in all times to come, several small islands in that region were afterwards called Absyrtides.

Medea's expectation, however, was realized. Her father, first retarded by collecting together the remains of his unfortunate son, afterwards desisted entirely from his pursuit, and the Argonauts quietly proceeded on their voyage. Having received advice from Phineus not to return to their native land by the same course which they had pursued in coming to Colchis, they sailed up the Danube, "and when they could ascend the river no farther, the strong heroes," says the fiction, "took up their lightly built vessel on their shoulders, carrying her for the space of four miles over hills and dales, as far as the Adriatic gulf." But here, when they were about to embark again, the following oracle was heard to issue out of the mast of the Argo: "you are not destined to reach your home until Jason and Medea are absolved

from the murder of Absyrtus, after having atoned for their crime by a penalty imposed on them."

With a view to this atonement, the Argonauts entered the port of Ææa, the abode of Circe, a daughter of the sun, and sister of Æetes. She, however, refused to absolve Jason and Medea, by presenting the usual offerings to the offended immortals, and by imposing a penalty on the criminals, announcing to them that they could not blot out their guilt until they had reached the promontory of Malea.

Thence the bold navigators steered towards the dangerous strait of Scylla and Charybdis, which they passed under the guidance of Juno. By the persuasion of Orpheus they escaped the danger which threatened them from the Sirens, and happily reached the island of the Phæacians, where, however, they met with an unexpected enemy. After the funeral obsequies of Absyrtus had been properly celebrated, the Colchian fleet, which had desisted from its pursuit at the mouth of the Danube, took another way to intercept the fugitives; and here, at the island of the Phæacians, it was stationed, to watch for them. The anger of the Colchians against Medea, as well as the Argonauts, having in the meantime somewhat abated, they demanded no other restitution but the person of Medea, provided she had not yet been married to Jason. This was really the fact; but the king of the Phæacians procured in that very night a private celebration of the matrimonial rites, announcing on the following day to the Colchians, that his guests, Jason and Medea, were a lawful couple; whereupon the former, satisfied with the answer, spread their sails to the winds, and steered for Colchis.

The Argonauts, after having taken leave of their friendly host, the king of the Phæacians, endeavoured to reach the promontory of Malea, when suddenly a storm cast them on the Libyan syrtes, where the vessel would have been lost but for the appearance of a Triton, who, for the reward of a precious tripod which Jason

carried along with him in the ship, promised the heroes to show them the only course by which they could possibly escape. After having received the tripod, at the sight of which he was highly delighted, the Triton kept his word, and conducted the Argo in safety out of the surrounding syrtes. Moreover, he presented Euphemus, one of the Argonauts, with a clod of earth, as a pledge that his descendants should reign in Libya. This pledge was afterwards redeemed.

Argo at last reached the longed for promontory of Malea, where Jason and Medea, after having brought rich offerings to the immortal gods, gained absolution of their crime committed against Absyrtus. They were now permitted to expect, according to the oracle which they had received from the oak of Dodona, as well as the promise of Circe, soon to reach their native port. And indeed without meeting with any farther accident, the Argonauts soon after entered the harbour of Iolcos. The good ship Argo was devoted by Jason to Neptune, on the isthmus of Corinth, from whence fiction afterwards transported her to the vault of the sky, where she shines as a glittering constellation.

The golden fleece was now gained, but the purpose for which alone Jason had exposed himself, as well as his friends, to every imaginable danger, was frustrated; his father, Æson, having in the meanwhile become a decrepit, childish old man, neither able to reign, nor to rejoice at the glorious feats of his son.

The first request, therefore, which Jason made to Medea, was to use her magic powers to renew, if possible, both the bodily and mental abilities of his father. Medea, complying with her husband's request, infused a new juice of life, prepared of secret herbs, into the veins of the old man, so as to make him feel the return of his gay youth, and the renewed strength of life; while the daughters of Pelias, foolishly imitating the work of Medea, deprived their father, whom they also

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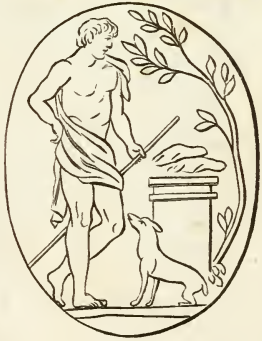

Moritzs Mythology.

wished to revive with invigorated youth, of his life, so that Æson now reigned undisturbed sole king of Iolcos.

Jason betook himself with Medea to Corinth, formerly called Ephyra, where Æetes, before he went to the fertile Colchis, had reigned. Medea took possession of the government for her husband, and they lived there quietly during ten years. Behind this calm of peaceful life, however, a dreadful storm was lurking, which threatened Jason with a tragic fate, as was the case also with Hercules, Perseus, and Bellerophon.

Weary of Medea, whom he seemed to have always secretly despised, he was going to marry Creon's royal daughter, unmindful of the revenge of despised jealousy or disregarded faith. Medea feigned patience and mildness, enduring with resignation what she could not prevent; she even herself sent to the bride a costly wedding garment. But scarcely had the latter made use of the dangerous present, than she suddenly felt a consuming fire raging through her body, which brought on an agonizing death. Then Medea, giving full scope to revenge, rained fire upon Creon's palace, which consumed the king himself; murdered the two children whom she had by Jason, and hastened through the air in her chariot, drawn by two dragons, leaving Jason to grief and despair, which embittered the rest of his life, and shortened his days.

MELEAGER.

Œneus, who reigned in Calydon, was the father of renowned children: of Dejanira, who became married to Hercules; of Meleager and Tydeus, whose valorous son, Diomedes, during the siege of Troy engaged with the gods themselves in dangerous combat. This Œneus had the misfortune to draw Diana's wrath upon himself, as well as his country, by having forgotten her divine personage, while he was bringing thank-offerings

to all the other deities, for the thriving growth of the fruits of the field.

To punish him and his subjects for this offence, the goddess of the forest sent a monstrous boar into the Calydonian land, which wasted the fields, and threatened death and ruin to all the inhabitants of the surrounding country. Œneus, anxious to subdue this monster, desired the assistance of the strongest, both in the territories of Calydon and beyond them. Thus the chase of Diana's boar united again the flower of Greek heroes, as the expedition of the Argonauts had formerly brought together the most celebrated of their time.

THE CALYDONIAN CHASE.

To hunt the Calydonian boar, part of those heroes who had shared many a danger in the voyage to Colchis, again assembled. The most renowned of the Argonauts, who were now going to assist Meleager, son of Œneus, in conquering the raging beast of the forest, were,

JASON,
CASTOR and POLLUX,
IDAS and LYNCEUS,
PELEUS,
TELAMON,
ADMETUS,
PIRITHOUS and THESEUS.

To this noble troop, the brothers of Althæa, the wife of Œneus, and daughter of Thestius, who reigned in Pleuron, and Atalanta, the daughter of Schœneus, who, like Diana, had devoted herself to a state of virginity, and like her was a lover of the chase, associated themselves.

Atalanta first wounded the boar with her arrow, and then the monster was killed by Meleager, who cut off its head, and presented it as the deserved prize of victory to Atalanta. The brothers of Althæa disputed the

prize with Atalanta, and Diana, setting no bounds to her wrath, blew up the spark of anger between Meleager and the sons of Thestius into a flame, that burst out in bloody war, and gave to the Calydonian chase a tragical termination.

Meleager killed in the fray the brothers of his mother, who, beholding the bodies of the slain, swore to revenge their death even on her own son. And an easy, too easy, means of vengeance was in her power. For on the birth-day of Meleager, the Fates had placed a piece of wood on the hearth near the fire, with the hint, that Althæa's new-born son should live as long as that piece of wood should remain unconsumed by the fire. Althæa had preserved the fatal block as a precious treasure until that moment, when she was provoked to anger against Meleager by the death of her brothers. Then seizing it in her passion, she threw it into the blazing fire, and as it was gradually consuming to ashes, Meleager felt, by degrees, his body withering away, and the marrow of his bones drying up, until he died in convulsive agony. Scarcely had Althæa heard the cruel result of what she had done, than, ruing the deed, she put a period to her own life.

ATALANTA.

Neither did Atalanta long rejoice in her victory. Having received the prediction that unavoidable misfortune was to await her in matrimony, she declined marrying as long as possible. In order to deter her suitors, she proposed to each one to contend with her in the race, promising if she should be vanquished, to become the wife of the victor, with the condition, however, that the vanquished should suffer death.

Hippomenes, venturing to enter upon this dangerous race, implored the assistance of Venus, who presented him with three golden apples, which one after another he let slip from his hands during the course.

Atalanta, whose eyes were dazzled by the glitter and beauty of these golden fruits, repeatedly stooped to take them up from the ground, and thus Hippomenes gained time to reach the goal before her.

Atalanta became the wife of Hippomenes, but he was unmindful of the benefit which he owed to Venus, and both Atalanta and himself were obliged to atone for his offence against the goddess. Upon her impulse both had profaned a sanctuary of Cybele, who with formidable power transformed the criminal couple, united by the tie of matrimony, into two lions, that under one yoke drew her chariot.

MINOS.

In the shape of a mettled bull, (which with the ancients was a favourite symbol of their gods, the bull being an emblem of power,) Jupiter had ravished Europa, daughter of Agenor, and brought her to Crete, where she became the mother of Minos, who, worthy of his high descent, gave laws to the people, and by wise arrangement formed them into a regular and well governed state.

According to fiction, Minos, in a grotto on mount Ida, had occasional secret converse with his father Jove, the purport of which he announced to the listening people as the fundamental part of his legislation. In consequence of his wise government and justice, fiction transfers on him, together with his brother and counsellor, Rhadamanthus, as the most righteous of mortals, the judicature over the dead in the lower world; associating with them Æacus, the father of Peleus, and sometimes Triptolemus too, the benefactor of mankind.

Minos, the legislator, was at the same time a valiant and warlike prince, who, sweeping the pirates from the Mediterranean sea, rendered sailing and commerce safe. But the hero, who in various respects was the benefactor of mankind, was obliged to sustain misfortunes, which

shrouded his glorious victories in gloom, and poured bitterness into the cup of his life.

The wife of Minos was Pasiphaë, a daughter of the sun, and sister of Æetes. Venus, who bore an old grudge against this race, because Helios had discovered and betrayed her secret intercourse with Mars, instilled into Pasiphaë an unnatural passion for a bull, that Neptune had sent out of the sea. The infamous crime was committed during the absence of Minos, and Pasiphaë became the parent of a monster, half man and half bull, which, under the name of the Minotaur, often makes its appearance in ancient fictions.

Dædalus, the most skilful artist and architect of that time, on account of a crime committed in his native city of Athens, had fled to Crete; and Minos, to hide the disgrace of his house from the light of day, charged Dædalus with erecting that subterranean building with innumerable windings and mazy walks, which is known by the name of the Cretan Labyrinth. In the middle of it was the abode of the Minotaur, visible by those victims only who were thrown to the monster to be devoured by him, or by such as had dared to enter the labyrinth without being able to extricate themselves again, and thus came within the reach of its terrible inmate.

In the mean while, Androgeus, a son of Minos, accompanied by many of his friends, had undertaken a voyage to Athens, to participate in the celebration of the Athenian games. Having excited there, however, the jealousy and suspicion of Ægeus, the childless king of Athens, because he had carried the prize in every combat, and gained the applause of the whole people, the promising son of Minos was assassinated. No sooner was his father informed of this new misfortune that had befallen him, than he went over to Athens with his whole force, to avenge the heinous and cruel murder.

He first besieged the city of Nisa, where Nisus, a brother of Ægeus, was king. Nisus, with his city, was

betrayed by his own daughter, Scylla, who, having conceived a tender passion for Minos, in disregard both of duty and filial love, cut off from the head of her father, while he was sleeping, a golden lock, by means of which he had been invincible. She handed this lock, the strength of her father, to Minos, but instead of gaining favour with the Cretan ruler as she had expected, she was punished by him according to her deserts: he employed the gift to his advantage, but treated the giver with scorn and contempt.

After the attack on Nisa, which city was afterwards called Megara, Minos immediately moved with his army towards Athens, which, oppressed by drought and famine, was already groaning under the wrath of the gods, and its distressful fate. In addition to those miseries, it was declared by an oracle, that the immortals would not cease to send misfortunes on the city, until it should have given to Minos ample satisfaction for the murder committed on his son. Upon this the Athenians sent ambassadors to the ruler of Crete, who appeared before him with humble demeanour, and supplicated peace. The hard condition on which this peace was granted, was this, that Athens should send annually seven of its handsomest youths, and seven of its most beautiful maidens, to Crete, in order, as victims for their native land, to expiate the murder of Androgeus, by becoming the prey of the Minotaur.

When Theseus had at last killed this monster, and fled with Ariadne, the daughter of the Cretan monarch, Minos, not able to avenge himself in any other manner, shut up the Athenian Dædalus, together with his son, Icarus, in the Labyrinth, the work of his own hands. The art of Dædalus, however, supplied him with the means of flying with his son out of prison, and of reaching Sicily, where he met with a friendly reception on the part of Cocalus, the king of the island.

Minos, who demanded that Dædalus should be delivered up to him, having been invited by Cocalus to a

personal interview, came in compliance with this invitation to Sicily, where he was received by the king with the appearance of friendship and hospitality, but in the end was secretly suffocated when bathing. Thus Minos, the wise legislator, the valiant warrior, the benefactor of mankind, found his death in a foreign country, while pursuing the artist, who was protected by the immortals.

DÆDALUS.

At Athens, Minerva's sacred city, plastic art first developed itself, claiming an eminent rank among the occupations of men.

Dædalus, a descendant of the royal race of the Erechthides, is said by fiction to have infused life and motion into the statues made by him. It was he who first separated the legs of his statues, which formerly, as is yet to be seen on Ægyptian monuments, were united together, and who, in like manner, dislodged the arms from the body, giving his figures a moving attitude. It is no wonder, therefore, that such a representation, entirely new as it was, should fill every soul with astonishment, and give rise to the saying, that Dædalus' statues were endowed with motion.

This first step of Dædalus involved something lofty and divine, which excited the admiration of posterity, and immortalized the name of the artist, although its glory has been tarnished by a black and cruel deed.

Under the guidance of Dædalus, a youth named Talus, son of the artist's sister, while engaged in the practice of the art, was one day cutting a piece of wood with the jaw-bone of a snake, when he conceived the idea of imitating the sharp teeth in iron, and thus became the inventor of the *saw*, one of the most useful, as well as most necessary instruments for man. Another invention of Talus was the potter's wheel. Dædalus, jealous of the progress of his pupil, cherished a

deadly hatred against him, thus showing in the very outset of art, the envy of artists, almost inseparable from art itself. Leading the promising youth to a steep height, Dædalus, ere the innocent victim of his jealousy and hatred was aware of his intention, hurled him down into the abyss, because he wished to take a higher flight than even his master had attained.

When this infernal deed became known in the city of Athens, Dædalus, although as an artist he graced Minerva's mansion, was condemned to die, and he would have been executed but for his flight to Crete, where his divine art contrived the Labyrinth. The wonderous abode of the Minotaur, which his hands had reared, became the prison of himself and his son. But art, even while imprisoned, shakes off her shackles, and takes her flight to the sky. Dædalus attempted what appeared to all but himself impossible to be performed. There was but one outlet through which he could hope to escape, and this was in the high, arched ceiling. He procured for himself by artifice the necessary implements for making wings, and after having exercised his son Icarus in the use of them, and given him warning not to raise himself too high, lest the wax with which the feathers of his wings were united should be melted by the sun-beams, nor, on the other hand, to pursue too low a course, lest they should be wetted by the water of the sea, both father and son took their flight through the opening of their prison.

Icarus, overjoyed at his sailing through the air like a bird, and forgetful of the counsel which his father had given him, soared in an elevated course toward the sky, and fell from an immense height, the wax of his wings having melted by the heat of the sun-beams. The sea, in which he found his death, was called after him the Icarian. Dædalus, who without pity had hurled Talus into the abyss, is now obliged, with distress of soul, to witness the fall of his own son, to whom he can afford no help.

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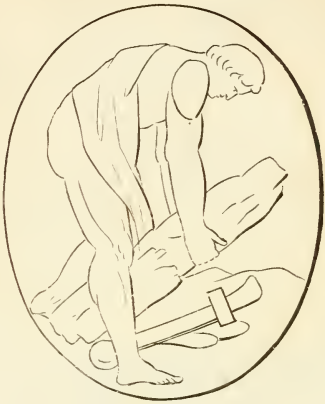

He himself descended on Sicily, where he was hospitably received by King Cocalus, and defended by him against the persecution of Minos. Grateful for this hospitality and protection, the artist undertook several great works, both of architecture and sculpture, in the territory and for the benefit of King Cocalus. He dug canals and ponds, he built a castle upon a high rock, levelled the top of mount Eryx, and consecrated there a golden cow, formed by his own hands, to the Erycinian Venus.

Long after his time traces of his genius and art were still found in Sicily, and his name became proverbial to denote whatever is ingenious as well as artificial.

Upon ancient works the representation of Dædalus is often found, as he is sitting and musing before the artificial wing, on which he is still labouring with forming hand.

THESEUS.

Ægeus, a son of the Athenian king, Pandion, remaining without children, went to Delphi, to ask advice of the oracle of Apollo. Pythia bade him abstain from intercourse with the sex until his return to Athens, but this very interdict induced him to trespass against it.

On his return he went to the mansion of his friend, Pittheus, a son of Pelops, at Trœzen, where he privately married the daughter of his host, Æthra. Before he left Trœzen, he concealed his sword and sandals beneath a large stone, bidding Æthra, if she should bring forth a son, not to send him to Athens until he became strong enough to lift the stone, under which his father's sword and sandals had been hidden.

Æthra became the mother of Theseus, who was educated by Connidas, under the inspection of wise Pittheus, his grand-father; and as often as the Athenians afterwards celebrated the festivals instituted in honour of Theseus, the name of Connidas, the tutor of the hero, was mentioned with veneration. When Theseus was

grown up, his mother showed him the stone, on which he was to try his strength. Lifting it up, he took from beneath his father's sword and sandals, with which he entered upon his journey to Athens.

Imitating the great example of Hercules, whom the glowing soul of the young hero had embraced as his model, he chose the more dangerous way by land, where he had to fight against robbers, who made the roads unsafe, and treated the strangers that fell into their hands in the most cruel manner. When Theseus, armed with his father's good sword, was passing on his way from Trœzen, on the isthmus, through the country of Epidaurus, he first met with Periphetes, famous for his cruelty, who, trusting to his gigantic strength, laid wait for travellers with no other weapon than a club, which, however, was the terror of all the country around. Theseus, assaulted by him, stretched him to the ground by the aid of his good sword, and ever after carried the club of his foe in remembrance of his first victory.

Upon the isthmus of Corinth he fought a still more cruel murderer, Sinnis, who was called the bender of the pines, because it was his barbarous delight to fasten strangers between two pines, bent to the ground, which he suddenly let fly asunder, so that the bodies of the unfortunate victims were torn to pieces. Theseus conquered the monster, and obliged him to undergo the punishment which his cruelty and crimes deserved, by putting him to death in the same manner in which he had been accustomed to torment his fellow-creatures.

Theseus likewise delivered the countries through which he passed from monsters, killing among others the Cromyonian swine, which, wasting every where the fields, and threatening destruction to the inhabitants, was both a plague and a terror to the land. When he arrived at the borders of Megara, he fought with Sciron, vanquished him, and hurled him from the same steep

rock down into the sea, from which the tyrant had been in the habit, for many years, of throwing the travellers who frequented that road.

In Eleusis, Theseus fought with the robber Cercyon, whom he vanquished and killed; and upon his arrival, a short distance further, at Hermione, he found the formidable Damastes, who, from the particular kind of cruelty with which he abused foreigners, was called *Procrustes*, i. e. the *Stretcher*. For this tyrant is said to have had two iron bed-steads, of different lengths, in which he placed the strangers that arrived within his reach, and in such a manner as to lay the short ones into the long bed-stead, and those who were of a larger stature into the short one. He then stretched the former by force to the extremity of the bed-stead, and cut off the feet and legs of the latter as far as they reached beyond their couch of torture. Theseus, after having subdued him in a combat, subjected him to the same pain with which he had afflicted others, and then delivered the earth from the monster.

It seems as if fiction aimed here at representing the violation of the rights of hospitality in its most heinous light; for what can be imagined more cruel and barbarous, than to change the very place of repose into a rack. It was the sacredness of hospitality, under the protection of which men could first commune with each other, and contribute to their mutual civilization. To rid the earth of such as violated those sacred rights, and thereby hindered the progress of education among mankind, was a task worthy of the heroes, whose proper reward it is and must be, that their names are immortalized as the names of benefactors of the world.

When Theseus arrived at Athens, he was recognised and acknowledged by Ægeus as his son and successor on the royal throne; upon which the sons of Pallas, the brother of Ægeus, who had already flattered themselves with the hope of succeeding their childless uncle in the

government of Athens, excited a revolt, which, however, was quelled by Theseus in its rise.

It was then the third year that the Athenians had been obliged to send the sad tribute of fourteen of its handsomest children to Crete, as an atonement for the murder committed on Androgeus, the son of Minos; and as long as the monster, Minotaur, was alive, the Athenians durst not hope to be released from this tribute. When, therefore, the youths and maidens had drawn the lots of death, and, as the destined victims of the present year, were embarking, Theseus voluntarily offered himself as one of their number, in the hope of conquering the Minotaur by the heroism of his soul and the strength of his arm.

Before his departure, Theseus made a vow to Apollo, to send annually to his temple on the island of Delos, a ship laden with offerings and presents, if he should be successful in his undertaking; and upon inquiring of the oracle what the event should be, he received for answer, that if he would choose love for his guide, it should be successful. It was agreed upon between him and his father, that on the return of the ship a white sail, instead of the black one usually hoisted, should announce at a distance the issue of his adventure, should it prove to be happy.

The vessel, wafted by favourable winds, soon arrived at Crete, where, when the victims were presented to Minos, the eyes of Ariadne, his royal daughter, rested upon Theseus, whose noble stature and beauty made an impression on her heart, never to be erased. Theseus chose love for his guide, receiving from the hands of Ariadne the clew that made him secure of a passage out of the Labyrinth. Holding Ariadne's thread in his hand, he followed his companions, confidently descended into the mazes of the subterranean building, where, as soon as he had found the Minotaur, he began a desperate fight with the monster, and killed him, aided by the advice that Ariadne had given him.

With the death of the monster the Athenians were freed from the horrible tribute which they had paid twice with their own children, and their sons and daughters, already destined to die a cruel death, owed their preservation to Theseus. The expression of their gratitude became a favourite subject of plastic art, in ancient as well as in modern times. A picture, found in the old city of Herculaneum, in Italy, shows the hero surrounded by tender boys, who had been saved from death by his exertions, and who, in gratitude, are embracing his knees and kissing his hands.

Ariadne fled with her beloved Theseus to the island of Naxos, where, however, Theseus was forced by the will of the gods to desert her, because Bacchus himself had been captivated by her charms. The god found her sleeping at night in the open air, and when she awoke, he cast, in token of his divinity, the golden crown which she wore on her head, toward the sky, where it immediately shone as a splendid constellation, and bore witness to the marriage of Bacchus and Ariadne.

Before Theseus returned to Athens, he sailed to the island of Delos, in order to pay his vow to Apollo. At the same time he consecrated there to Venus, in gratitude for the assistance he had received from her, a statue made by Dædalus; and to preserve the memory of his victory over the Minotaur, he instituted in Delos a dance, in which the windings of the Labyrinth were imitated.

The sacred vow which Theseus had made to the god of Delos was, long after his death, always fulfilled by the Athenians with the greatest care. In the very same ship in which the hero had returned from Crete, ambassadors, crowned with olive wreaths, were sent every year to Delos; and to make the vessel, as it were, everlasting, she was always carefully refitted whenever any part had been injured by time, so that she became at last a different ship from that which had borne These-

us, although she was still considered as the same. Nor was it permitted at Athens to put any criminal to death while this ship was on her passage to and from Delos; a circumstance which long afterwards spared, for a short time, the life of the divine Socrates. It was a law, worthy of the sublime sentiments of the Athenians during their better times, that, while the delivery of their children from destruction was celebrated, no one should become a victim of violent death.

From Delos, Theseus steered directly to Athens, to announce there the happy issue of his enterprise, which was still to terminate in a tragical event. For when Ægeus, standing on a high rock near the sea-shore, and looking with anxiety over the waters for the returning ship, descried at last a black sail, which the pilot had forgotten to exchange for a white one, he threw himself in despair into the sea, which was called after his name, the Ægean.

Theseus was received with loud applause by the Athenians, as their protector and deliverer from a tribute of the most distressful kind; and succeeding his father on the royal throne, he availed himself of the affection of his people to introduce a wise course of government, as well as an improved code of laws. Indeed, he may be called the creator of the Athenian state, because he united the people who had lived until his day scattered and in small districts, by bringing them into one compact body in the city, which he divided into certain sections; he also settled the borders of the Athenian territory by treaties with the neighbouring tribes. And because he had succeeded in modelling the people according to his views, he instituted the religious service of *Peitho*, the goddess of persuasion.

After having accomplished his task as a royal magistrate and legislator, Theseus gave an example of magnanimity, which rendered him worthy of the admiration of all successive ages. Divesting himself voluntarily of the greater part of his authority, he endeavoured,

in compliance with the voice of an oracle, to prepare Athens for becoming a republic. In honour of Neptune, whom fame called his father, he renewed the Isthmean games, and as all Greece assembled at the celebration of them, he contributed in this way to promote intercourse and general improvement among the people.

Nevertheless, Theseus did not rest from warlike occupations. He accompanied Hercules on his expedition against the Amazons, and was rewarded for his services by this hero with the hand of the captive queen, Antiope, who presented him with a son, named Hippolytus. When the Amazons afterwards made an invasion into the territory of Attica, they were vanquished by Theseus a second time.

An amiable feature in the history of this hero is, the inseparable friendship which united him with Pirithous. Pirithous was a Thessalian prince, who ruled over the Lapithæ. The friendship subsisting between the two heroes originated thus. Jealous of each other's celebrity, they one day tried their valour and strength in a combat, until, affected by mutual esteem and regard, they suddenly ceased fighting, embraced each other, and formed that union of friendship which no time could dissolve.

There was now no danger too great for Theseus and Pirithous to brave; none that could separate the heroes. Pirithous was involved in a war with the Centaurs, a Thessalian nation, whom fiction, because of their fighting on horseback, represents as beings who were half men and half horses. When Pirithous was going to marry Hippodamia, in addition to Hercules, Theseus, and several other renowned chiefs, he invited also to the wedding feast the most distinguished of the Centaurs, after having made a truce with them. Heated by wine, they began a quarrel during the repast, threatened to carry away Hippodamia, and would have made good their threat but for Hercules and Theseus, who valiantly assisted Pirithous, and punished the haughty

pride of the Centaurs, not only on that occasion, but afterwards also in a regular battle. This is the famous quarrel between the Centaurs and Lapithæ, so often a subject of poetry, as well as of art, with the ancients.

Neither did Pirithous and Theseus forsake one another, when the question was to win the objects of their tender affections and wishes. Pirithous assisted Theseus in ravishing Helena, the sister of the Dioscuri; and the latter lent his aid to Pirithous, when he had resolved on descending into the lower world, and by ravishing Proserpina herself, to take vengeance, as it were, on Pluto, for having deprived him of his wife, Hippodamia. There is a deep sense hidden in this latter fiction. The undertaking was one which inevitably involved the most imminent danger, and Theseus, faithful to his friend even unto death, descended with him

"To the seat of desolation, void of light."

There the daring deed miscarried, and Pluto kept them both prisoners in chains, until Hercules loosened the bands of Theseus; but he strove in vain to free Pirithous, and thus death separated the most faithful of friends.

This loss was the forerunner of many misfortunes which afterwards befel Theseus, embittering the rest of his days. It had been the common lot of the greatest heroes, to end their life in a tragical manner, and from it Theseus was not exempted.

When he came back to Athens, he found the fickle and ungrateful people excited against him by his enemies, and, while he was struggling against the public enemy, a domestic foe arose in the bosom of his family. After Antiope's death, Theseus had married Phædra, a daughter of Minos, and sister of Ariadne. Venus, directing her hatred of Pasiphaë against her daughter also, instilled into Phædra a criminal love towards

her step-son, Hippolytus; which, however, soon turned into furious hatred, when the virtuous youth indignantly refused to lend his ear to her flatteries, or to return her caresses. She calumniated Hippolytus to his father, charging him with the very crime which she herself had intended to perpetrate; and Theseus, inflamed with rash anger, was hurried to imprecations against his innocent son, who at that time was riding in his chariot near the sea-shore. Neptune had promised Theseus infallibly to grant him three requests; and scarcely had the curse escaped from the unfortunate father's lips, when a sea-monster rose from the deep, at the sight of which the horses of Hippolytus started, and throwing off their driver, dragged him to death. When Phædra heard of the fate which had befallen her innocent victim, in bitter repentance she put an end to her life, and Theseus, discovering too late the innocence of his son, was nigh to despair.

Meanwhile, the discontent of the Athenian people had risen still higher, and Theseus, oppressed by his misfortunes as well as their ingratitude, banished himself from Athens, uttering, before he went on board the ship that was to carry him to a foreign country, the bitterest curses against the Athenians. The place where this happened was afterwards called the place of imprecations.

The unfortunate old man hoped to be permitted to live out the rest of his life in external quiet in the isle of Scyros; but the treacherous Lycomedes, who was king of the island, violated, through fear of the enemies of Theseus, the sacred rights of hospitality. Under the pretext of showing his guest the island, he conducted him to the summit of a steep rock, and hurled him down unawares.

Long after his death, the Athenians built temples and altars in honour of Theseus, revering him as a demi-god, bringing him offerings, and instituting festivals to his memory. The coffin in which the earthly remains

of Theseus had been deposited, was found on the island of Scyros, some time after his death, and those who were then living were astonished at its immense size. His temple at Athens, in which the deeds of the hero were partly represented in pictures, was called *Theseum*. Its ruins may be seen even in our days.

Thus has been honoured by posterity that godlike race of men, in whose bosoms the spark of Prometheus had enkindled a glowing and sacred flame.

BEINGS WHO FORM THE CONNECTING LINK BETWEEN THE GODS AND MEN.

As soon as fiction descends from heaven to earth, divine beings grow more numerous. Imagination discovers life every where, in fountains, in groves, and in hills, and ascribes to this life corporeal form, according to her pleasure. In this manner all nature, both inanimate and living, becomes at last sacred; Deity fills the Whole, and the Whole is Deity, revealing herself only in different forms, and under different shapes. In the midst of all stands MAN, hearing

> ——————" from the steep
> Of echoing hill, or thicket,
> Celestial voices through the midnight air."*

Be it that this world, which *imagination* has created here, is nothing but an airy castle; who can deny that it is pleasing to the sight, however unsuitable it is for a residence.

GENII, DEMONS.

According to the idea of the ancients, man was intimately connected with the Deity, by means of the genii, or tutelary beings. The highest divinity multiplies her-

* Paradise Lost, Book IV. 680, ss.

self, as it were, in these beings; like a guardian angel, leading in her hand every individual mortal through life, from the hour of his birth to that of his death. In this sense it was, that man swore by *his* Jupiter, and woman by *her* Juno, speaking of their own genius or particular tutelary deity.

On their birth-days the ancients brought offerings to their respective genii, who were represented in the shape of handsome youths, having their heads crowned with flowers. Thus man, following the motions of his heart, venerated in himself something higher and diviner, than he could find and clearly understand in his being's limited individuality, bringing to "this great unknown of himself," offerings as a god, and thus by his veneration compensating for his indistinct knowledge of himself, and of his divine origin.

According to another fiction, the souls of the departed, particularly of those who lived in the golden age, and were thought to have returned to the great Spirit of life in perfect purity and innocence, were the tutelary beings of the living.

MUSES.

Fiction calls these celestial beings children of Jupiter and Mnemosyne. Mnemosyne, who has already been mentioned among the ancient deities, was a Titanide, a daughter of Heaven and Earth, and sister of Saturn. By the union of heavenly and terrestrial influences, Memory, the mother of all reflection, as well as of all knowledge, was born in her. During nine days and nine nights lofty Jove remained in intimate union with Mnemosyne, and she became the mother of the nine Muses.

One of the most ancient bards thus sings the praises of the nine sisters: "They pour on the lips of the man who is favoured by them, the dew of soft persuasion; they bestow wisdom on him, that he may be a judge

and an umpire among his people, and give him renown among the nations. And the poet who wanders on mountain-tops, and in lonely dales, is inspired by them with divine strains, which dispel sorrow and grief from the breast of every mortal."

The names of the Muses denote music, joy, dance, song, and love; they are,

Clio,	Terpsichore,
Melpomene,	Euterpe,
Thalia,	Erato,
Calliope,	Urania,

Polyhymnia.

Music, song, and dance, are, properly speaking, their employments; in later times, however, playful fiction has attributed to each of the sisters a particular occupation. Thus, Clio becomes the Muse of history; Calliope of epic poetry; Melpomene of tragedy, and Thalia of comedy; on Polyhymnia's lips dwells eloquence; Urania's face turned towards the sky embraces the course of the stars; and the other three, Euterpe, Terpsichore, and Erato, divide music, song, and dance among them; Euterpe plays on the flute, Terpsichore rejoices in the dance, and Erato sings the sweet lays of love. Yet these particular occupations are sometimes confounded in the fictions.

The principal abodes of the Muses were the celebrated mountains Parnassus, Pindus, and Helicon. In their sacred grove on Helicon rose the fountain Aganippe, and higher, on the top of the mount, bubbled the inspiring Hippocrene, which had gushed forth from under the hoof of Pegasus. On the descent of Parnassus the Castalian spring gave rise to a meandering brook; and in Macedonia's mountains, Pimplea sent forth her living waters in never ceasing plenty. All these fountains and brooks were the sacred retreats in which the divine sisters, on whose lips the stream of song and sweet eloquence never died, passed their time on earth.

The Muses were called *Pierides*, from the country of *Pieria*, in Macedonia, in which they were born. Among the celestials, Apollo is most intimately connected with them, and he presides over the sister-choir, when on mount Parnassus they take their golden harps,

> "And with preamble sweet
> Of charming symphony, they introduce
> Their sacred song, and waken raptures high.
> No voice exempt; no voice but well could join
> Melodious part."*

From thus presiding over and leading the choir of the Muses, Apollo received the name of Musagetes. In this character is the god represented by the plastic art of the ancients, clothed in a long, flowing garment, very like that of a female, and which in olden times was the festive attire of the bards. Modern art too, did not fail to profit by this beautiful delineation.

Hercules also, under the name of Musagetes, was venerated by the ancients as leader of the Muses. This fact will the less surprise us, if we consider, that according to various writers, and principally Plato in his Republic, the science of harmony, together with wisdom and bodily strength, was the most desirable acquisition for a Greek; and, therefore, that music, philosophy, and regular corporal exercises, went hand in hand in his education, in order to gain its three great ends, viz. to cultivate the feelings of his heart, to unfold the understanding of his mind, and to strengthen and direct the will of his soul Philosophy there was none in the days of Hercules, but in his person music could be combined with strength, as both were found united in the person of Achilles.

The Muses were once challenged by the Sirens to a contest in singing. They easily obtained the victory over their rivals, and punished their arrogance by plucking the feathers out of their wings, wearing them afterwards on their heads, as a sign of superiority.

* Paradise Lost, Book III. 367, ss.

Upon an ancient monument a Siren is represented, from her waist upward a beautiful maiden, and downward shaped like a fowl, wearing two large wings on her shoulders, and carrying in her hands two flutes. She is turning a mournful countenance toward a Muse, who, standing behind her, triumphantly holds with her one hand the wing of the Siren, while with the other she plucks out the largest feathers.

The song of the Muses was faithful and true, but false and seducing were the flattering notes of the Sirens; as their maiden-like form ended in the foul shape of a monster, so the sweet sounds of their voices beguiled unwary mariners to death and ruin. The fiction, therefore, of the vanquished Sirens is significant; the victory of truth over falsehood is here also indicated.

Presumption and arrogance in the use of talents of art are always severely punished in ancient fictions. The Satyr Marsyas was flayed by Apollo for having ventured on a contest with the god, thinking to surpass the harp with his flute; and Thamyris, the Thracian bard, who, vain of his talents both in music and poetry, dared challenge the daughters of Mnemosyne themselves, was punished by them with blindness and the loss of his lyre, in other words, of his poetical ability.

One single Muse, shown by creative art either with a scroll, or two flutes, or a lyre in her hand, often represents in her person all the nine sisters. Yet whenever they are distinguished individually, the parchment-scroll signifies either Clio, the Muse of history, or Polyhymnia, the Muse of eloquence. The two flutes indicate Euterpe, the Muse of harmony; and the lyre, Erato, the Muse of lyric poesy. Melpomene, the Muse of tragedy, is known by her tragic mask, and the comic indicates Thalia, the Muse of comedy. Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, is distinguished by a trumpet, and Terpsichore by her dancing attitude. Urania, who measures the course of the stars, turns her eyes upward to the sky.

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Moritz's Mythology.

All these different representations, however, have been arbitrarily used by the ancients. The great number of the Muses is to indicate the harmony of the fine arts, that go hand in hand in sisterly union, and must not be rigorously separated from each other. In modern times it has been attempted to assign, with pedantic accuracy, to each Muse her own particular avocation; but the imagination of the ancients acknowledged here no limitation. Upon ancient marble coffins the whole sisterhood of the Pierides are to be seen represented in various manners and different attitudes. A series of wall-pictures among the antiquities of Herculaneum, is the only monument which exhibits the nine sisters, accurately distinguished from each other, because the name of every one is placed beneath her figure. The latter circumstance, however, seems to suggest, that the artist himself did not consider the external characters of his Muses sufficient to designate them, even according to the ideas of his own times.

CUPIDS, EROTES.

The divine person of *Amor*, or rather *Cupid*, is likewise multiplied by the imagination of the ancients; those little cupids, or genii of love, who every where appear in ancient fictions, are, as it were, sparks of his being.

Poetry is inexhaustible in beautiful emblematic representations of the all-conquering god. Thus we find him represented as he is breaking Jupiter's thunderbolt; or as he is arrayed in the lion-skin of Hercules, and armed with his club; or as he is stepping on the helmet of Mars, whose shield and spear are lying at his feet; or, finally, as he is riding on a lion, taming the beast by the strains of his lyre—a beautiful emblem of the combined power of love and music.

Under the Greek appellations, *Eros* and *Anteros*, *love* and *love requited*, ancient art represents two cupids, con-

tending for the possession of a palm-branch, to signify zeal in mutual love.

Ancient gems and pictures show us the cupids in a vast variety of occupations. One of these monuments exhibits a cupid, sitting on an elm-tree, to which the vine is wedded, and gathering grapes, while two others stand under the tree, waiting for a gift from their brother. They are found hunting, fishing, managing the oar on the water, as well as directing the chariot by land, and even busied with mechanical employments. Since, however, every occupation had, according to the ideas of old, its particular genius, the fiction of the cupids loses itself in the idea of the genii, so that these tender beings of imagination are often intermingled.

THE GRACES.

The eminently dazzling charms of the powerful goddess of Love are multiplied in the Graces.

These three charming beings descended from heaven for the benefit of mortal men, instilling into their bosoms the lovely feelings of gratitude and mutual benevolence, and gracing their persons with the precious gift of pleasing.

They were children of Jupiter and Eurynome, the beautiful daughter of Oceanus, and their names were Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne. Temples and altars rose every where to their honour; every age and every profession solicited their favour; arts and sciences paid homage to them; their altars were never without fragrant incense, and at every joyful repast their names were mentioned with veneration.

Associated in friendly union with Love and the Muses, they had often a temple in common with the former, and still oftener with the latter. In Olympus they surrounded the throne of Jupiter. In heaven and on earth their dominion was acknowledged, and their influence, without which beauty itself is but a dead pic-

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ture, was respected and honoured. In the dancing attitude of the three graceful sisters, the charms of personal dignity, of elegant movement, of attitude and countenance, by which beauty gains the soul of man, are expressed; and walking hand in hand as loving sisters, they indicate also every tender emotion of a heart overflowing with affection, friendship, and benevolence.

The happy influence which the religious veneration of these lovely and significant beings exercised on the ideas and feelings of the ancients, is to be recognised in the whole life of the Greeks, as well as in their works of art and science. The favour of the Graces was nowhere to be dispensed with, and in order to intimate, that to make even the most extravagant formations of fancy agreeable, Grace must be concealed, hollow statues of Satyrs were formed, within which were to be found little figures of the Graces.

HORÆ, SEASONS.

Under the name of Horæ, the ancient fictions comprise, in the first place, the genii of justice, the children of Jupiter and Themis; and then the Seasons, which, by a just partition, as it were, of their benefits, preserve, in continual change, the equipoise of nature.

The dancing Horæ, following one another in measured steps, are an emblem of fleeting time. As friends and companions of the Graces, they often mingle with them in a common choir. They stand likewise around Jupiter's throne, and their regular business is to open and shut the gates of heaven, and every morning to yoke the steeds to the chariot of the sun.

Winkelmann's monuments contain a representation of three Horæ, taken from an antique work in marble. One of them, crowned with palm-leaves, and standing before an altar, bearing fruits in her hands, signifies Autumn; another, before whose feet a flower has sprung up, is an emblem of Spring; and the third,

near whom, on a pile of stones, like an altar, a little fire is seen, intimates Winter. Under the serene and mild sky of Greece, summer and autumn vary but little in temperature, as well as in products, and, therefore, one emblem was sufficient for both. The Athenians had originally only two Seasons, Thallo and Carpo, blossom and fruit, the whole year having been divided by them into spring and autumn.

NYMPHS.

The imagination of the ancients, fond of connecting the idea of something divine with objects that are strong and lasting, and outlive the generations of men, as the firmly rooted mountain, the ever-flowing spring, and the solid oak, attributed to hills and fountains, to forests, and even to single trees, immortal souls ; for in this light may those beings be considered, who, under the name of Nymphs, were thought to animate them.

Thus the Oread roams on the mountains, pursuing with her sisters, in the retinue of Diana, the tracks of the deer, closing her heart to every tender affection, like the unyielding deity whom she follows.

In the lonely hour of noon, the Naiad sat with her water pitcher at her spring, sending forth from it the warbling brook. Although less cruel than their mountain-sisters, the caresses of the Naiads proved dangerous. They embraced handsome Hylas, the favourite of Hercules, when he was getting water, and drew him down into the fountain.

In the sacred gloom of the forest the Dryads abode, while the Hamadryad lived within her own single tree, with which she was born, and with which she died. Whoever, therefore, spared a tree, laid the Nymph that dwelt in it under an obligation for her life.

In this manner inanimate nature itself became an object of sympathetic benevolence to man.

SATYRS.

The forest, with its shades and deep recesses, is the scene also of those wanton beings, called Satyrs, whose human shape is disfigured by the horns and feet of a goat. They are, as it were, the middle link, which in nature's great chain connects the brute creation with the human world.

The slender foot of a goat is, in a burlesque manner, joined to a human form in these beings, and a similar contrast exhibits youthful wantonness and careless levity, blended with the higher spirit that dwells in them. Although mortal, they are raised superior to the cares and sorrows of men.

Belief in the existence of these beings, as well as of all others of the same kind, must necessarily subsist the longer, because it was not permitted to behold a Nymph or a Satyr unpunished. Thus, instead of endeavouring to ascertain the truth or falsehood of their existence, every one shunned the sight of them, avoiding such places as, according to report, they had chosen for their haunts. It was the inspired poet alone, who, amidst lonely rocks, beheld in the train of Bacchus, Nymphs and Satyrs listening to the instruction of the god, and goat-footed Satyrs with erect and pointed ears.

In the Satyrs, art has attempted to represent human form bordering as near as possible on brutal shape. A Satyr, exhibited upon an antique gem, as he is contending with a he-goat, and pushing him, is scarcely distinguishable from that animal, except by his body and arms, the shape of the goat being extended, even to the face, which, although human, betrays the nature of the brute.

These comic creatures intermingling with Nymphs, Genii, and Cupids, produce in the train of Bacchus an agreeable contrast; and it would seem as if they were a necessary part of those groups, and of the divine for-

mations in general; fiction being brought to perfection, as it were, by these half-divine and half-brutish beings, whose countenances expressed both laughter and mockery, with a mixture of concupiscence.

FAUNS.

The Fauns differ from the Satyrs, at least according to the technical language of modern times. They are represented entirely in human form, but with erect and pointed ears, and the tail of a goat. Yet a Faun is easily to be recognised, even without these external marks, by his rough, ignoble features, indicative of his mean, lascivious temper, and his inordinate desires. Still there are some ancient monuments, which show Fauns of admirable beauty, in whose features that half-brutish, sensual temper, is but slightly indicated.

Both the form and character of the Faun offer an inexhaustible source of representations to the ancient artists; and the chisel as well as the pencil is frequently employed in exhibiting the ridiculous being, either as he dances, or as he sits occupied in wreathing garlands, or as he plays with his goats, or as he rocks his little ones upon his knees, and in many other different attitudes. A great waste of time and art is often displayed in the representation of the Fauns, and their various occupations. To the most attractive monuments of antique art in this style, belong the following: an old Faun dancing his little one on his foot; another, turning the wheel of a well, to draw water for a Nymph, who, in the mean while, holds his thyrsus; two Fauns, sitting opposite each other, one occupied in drawing a thorn out of the other's foot; another, allowing a young Faun to drink out of a wine-pitcher.

All these different exhibitions show that *carelessness* is the chief feature in the character of these fictitious beings. Thus they are distinguished from men, and resemble the gods, according to the words of the ancient

bard: "on mortal man the celestials heaped much trouble and pain, but they themselves are free from cares."

PAN.

The whole race of Satyrs and Fauns is included at once, as it were, in the divine person of Pan; and thus this fiction of the imagination exhibits its perfect unity. The form of this personage is not essentially different from theirs. He is represented as an elderly person, but with a strong, muscular figure; his legs and thighs are covered with hair; he has the horns, feet, and tail of a goat; and a long, neglected beard hangs down upon his breast. He commonly wears the spotted skin of a fawn round his shoulders, and carries a crook, or the pastoral flute, with seven tubes, in his hand.

To this flute fiction assigns the following origin. When Pan, inflamed by love, was pursuing the Nymph Syrinx, and the course of the latter was stopped by the river Ladon, through the compassion of the celestials she became suddenly metamorphosed, and Pan tenderly embraced, instead of her, a bundle of reeds. The wind blowing into the reeds, produced mournful sounds, which Pan endeavoured to revive by putting together seven reed-tubes, each shorter than the other. Thus he invented the shepherd's flute, called Syrinx, after the name of the transformed Nymph.

According to the common fiction, Pan is a son of Mercury, and, like his father, born in Arcadia, where was his principal abode on mount Lycæus. Other fictions gave him a place with the ancient deities, among whom he, in a certain mysterious manner, signifies universal nature. The crooked shepherd's rod, which Pan bears in his hand, is also said to be not without its secret signification, indicating by its shape the return of the seasons, and the rotation of things.

Pan was imagined to be a being half beneficent and half to be dreaded; and for the very reason that the

idea of him was so wavering, he became a kind of bug-bear to the imagination of man. Any noise which reached the ear through nightly silence, and could not be explained in a natural way, or terrible voices that were heard, or thought to be heard from the lonely shore of the sea, or the bank of a river, were ascribed to Pan; and hence every terror that was caused by an unknown object, or of which the cause lay merely in the imagination, was called a *panic terror.*

Although herdsmen and shepherds dreaded the sight of Pan, yet they venerated him as the tutelary deity of themselves, and of their flocks and herds, and brought him frequent offerings.

The Ægipans and Panisci, called after Pan, were genii of forests and woods, shaped like the Satyrs with goat feet.

SYLVANUS,

A deity worshipped by the nations of Latium, differs in external appearance from Pan only in this respect, that, in order to intimate night in the forest, he bears a branch of cypress in his hand, which may also be considered as alluding to the joyless and melancholy nature of his abode, that rendered him an object of terror to peasants and shepherds.

There is an antique gem preserved in one of the European museums, generally known under the name of the Seal-ring of Michael Angelo, which is one of the finest specimens of lithotomy ever made, exhibiting in a very moderate compass all the above mentioned inferior divine beings, Nymphs, Cupids, Satyrs, and Fauns, united and mingled in one beautiful group.

Two vines, wedded to two elm trees, form by their tendrils a bower, over which two Cupids, hovering on their wings, spread a cover of cloth. In the midst of the whole group the noble form of a man is seen, holding a horse by the bridle. Three female

figures are carrying baskets filled with grapes on their heads, while two others are sitting and attending to a little child. With this group of the sitting figures a Faun is associated, who, cowering on his knees, is pouring wine, brought by a boy behind him, from a pitcher into a vessel, while a Satyr, who stands at his side, is winding his horn. The Cupid on the one elm is reaching from above into a basket with fruits, which one of the females carries on her head, while that on the other is presented by a Nymph with a cup of wine.

The whole charming picture relates, probably, to the education of young Bacchus, which had been committed to the Nymphs.

PENATES, LARES.

These were a kind of genii, or tutelary beings, peculiar to the Romans. Every city, every family, and every single house had, with the ancients, its particular tutelary deity or deities, to whose immediate protection its dearest concerns were intrusted.

The Lares, or domestic deities, were commonly two in number, who had their abode on the sacred hearth, and were represented as youths, with hats on their heads, travelling staves in their hands, and dogs at their sides. They were crowned with flowerets, and received offerings of the food which was prepared upon the hearth. Being witnesses of domestic happiness, or domestic misfortune, they hallowed the common events of every day by their presence, rendering, as it were, every house a temple.

PRIAPUS.

As nothing was considered by the ancients as impure or unhallowed, which is bidden by nature, the mysteries of propagation were regarded by them as something sa-

cred and divine; and the god Priapus, a son of Venus and Bacchus, who was the symbol of that law which is the source of human offspring, had in his peculiar form nothing offensive to their feelings.

Priapus, whose statue, sometimes hewn in stone, sometimes only carved in wood, and formed from the waist downward into a tapering pillar, commonly stood in gardens and fields, crowned with a wreath of herbs, and bearing a crooked knife in its hand, was likewise the guardian of vineyards, fields, and orchards. Milk, honey, and wine, were offered to him as sacrifices, that he might bless the fruits, and frighten away thieves. Without prejudice to the veneration shown to this god, the idea of frightful deformity and ugliness was connected with his person, and his statue not seldom served as a scarecrow.

TERMINUS.

Terminus was worshipped by the Romans as the guardian of landmarks. He had neither a particular temple, nor a particular statue, and was represented only by a square stone, or a log of wood. The sacrifices offered to him, consisted of the first fruits of corn, and cakes made of flour.

Besides Terminus, there were several other divine beings, of inferior rank, the worship of whom was peculiar to the Romans, and who may be briefly mentioned here.

PALES,

The goddess of Shepherds, is commonly represented as a venerable matron. Although she presided over the flocks, yet her worship was also a bloodless one: milk, with cakes made of millet, was the sacrifice offered to her.

FLORA,

The goddess of flowers, is represented as a young, handsome female, whose head is crowned with a chaplet, and whose robe is decorated with garlands of flowers. She was supposed to be the wife of the handsome god Zephyrus.

POMONA,

Who presided over the fruits, was the wife of Vertumnus. She is also represented in the prime of youth and beauty, decorated with the blossoms of fruit-trees, and bearing at the same time a branch, loaded with fruits, in her hand.

FERONIA,

An inferior goddess, or guardian deity of woods and groves. It is related of her, that when a grove near mount Soracte, in Etruria, which was sacred to her, took fire, and the inhabitants of the adjoining country hastened to rescue her statue from the flames, the goddess immediately restored to the grove its former verdure. Feronia was also regarded by the manumitted slaves as that being who took them under her particular protection.

COMUS.

This was the god of gay humour, merry jests, and cheerful enjoyment of life. Consequently he presided at nightly banquets, and, in general, at all social feasts. In allusion to his midnight revelries, he is represented with heavy head and drowsy mien, bearing a half-extinguished torch in his hand. Thus the ancients con-

sidered the genius of cheerful enjoyment of life as not unworthy of a place in the series of their divine beings.

MOMUS.

He is said to be the son of Night and Sleep, and merely occupied in censuring the actions of the other deities in the most sarcastic manner.

HYMEN.

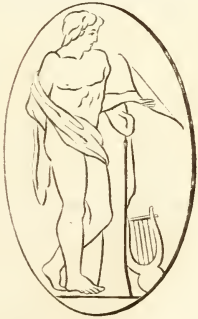
Hymen, the god or genius of matrimony, was the son of Bacchus and Venus Urania. He is represented as a handsome youth, wearing a wreath of roses round his head, and carrying in one hand the nuptial torch, while he holds a veil in the other. At every nuptial-feast he was celebrated in hymns chanted to his honour; and his presence hallowed the sacred union of the happy couple, as well as the joys of the wedding repast.

ORPHEUS,

A son of the Muse Calliope and Apollo, (or Œagrus,) and the unfortunate husband of Eurydice, like a being sent from heaven, first taught mortals to listen to his harmonious notes, when he was chanting the praise of the celestials. The divine bard, not less renowned for his wisdom than for his skill in poesy and music, became also the founder of religious mysteries. He is commonly represented holding the lyre in his hand, and surrounded by the animals of the field, together with the beasts of the forest; a significant emblem of the almighty power of harmony.

CHIRON.

Although Chiron, because of his immediate descent from old Saturn, has been already mentioned among



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the ancient deities, yet he belongs again to those beings who form the link between gods and men. For to his guidance and to his divine instruction the heroes who themselves afterwards augmented the number of the gods, owed their education.

Nothing can be more touching than the words which the poet puts into his mouth, when he bids farewell to Achilles, dismissing him for his expedition to Troy:

"Son of Thetis, the land of Assaracus, which is watered by the cold Scamander and the muddy Simois, awaits thee; thy return thence is cut off by the Parcæ; thence thy mother does not carry thee back on the blue waves of the sea. Forget, therefore, all cares in wine and the harmonious strains of thy lyre, and drive away all grief by sweet conversation."

ÆSCULAPIUS, ASCLEPIOS.

The first beginning of medical science was likewise considered by the ancients as something divine, and its possessor and practiser as worthy of veneration. He who first applied medical art, and became himself the victim of it, was looked upon, even after his death, as a beneficent, humane being, to whom the sick would not address their prayers in vain.

Æsculapius was a son of Apollo and Coronis, the daughter of a Thessalian king. When Apollo discovered that she entertained a secret understanding with Ischys, he punished her unfaithfulness with immediate death, saving Æsculapius, with whom she was pregnant, when she lay upon the funeral pile.

He was committed by his father to the care and instruction of the wise Centaur Chiron, who principally taught him botany, together with the secret efficacy of plants. By means of this information, Æsculapius became afterwards the benefactor of mankind, applying the various remedies, which he had learned

in part of Chiron, and in part discovered himself, to the diseases of men.

And so successful was he in the practice of his art, that fiction speaks of him as having several times even awakened the dead. Pluto, the ever-destroying power, considering this as an encroachment on his rights, complained of the awaker from death as a daring criminal before the throne of the Thunderer, who punished the second great benefactor of mankind as he had done the first, Prometheus, by hurling his lightnings upon his innocent head. He who assuaged the pains of men, and healed their diseases, thus became himself a victim of his beneficent art.

After his death, groves, temples, and altars were consecrated to him; but Epidaurus, in Greece, was the principal seat of his honour. His sons, Machaon and Podalirius, were heroes and leaders in the Trojan war, and at the same time renowned for their skill in medical art.

The snake, as an emblem of recovery and health, was sacred to Æsculapius, probably because of its stripping off its skin, and renewing itself, as it were, in this manner. Hence the god of medicine always carries a staff, around which a snake is twisted. The figure of a little boy is sometimes found joined with that of Æsculapius, wearing a bonnet on his head, and entirely muffled in a cloak. His name is Telesphorus, and his infant form, together with his unusual covering, seems to allude in a certain manner to a state of convalescence, as well as to the mysterious art of his master.

HYGIEA.

Hygiea, health, was considered as the daughter of Æsculapius, and therefore divine veneration was tendered to her. Her business, like that of her father, is the preservation of health, a benefit which she distributes among

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mortals as a mild gift, whenever she descends from the higher regions to earth.

She is likewise represented with a snake eating out of a flat cup which she holds in her hand.

THE FAVOURITES OF THE GODS.

The fictions respecting the favourites of the gods gain a particular charm by a kind of melancholy, indistinct twilight, in which they are veiled. Whenever youth and beauty became the prey of death, some deity was said to have carried off her favourite from the earth. In this manner mourning was mingled with joy, and lamentations for the departed were mitigated. These fictions, therefore, are oftenest represented upon the ancient marble coffins.

GANYMEDE.

Of Ganymede, a son of Tros, and great-grandson of Dardanus, the founder of Troy, the poet says: "he was the handsomest of mortal men." On account of his beauty the gods took him from the earth, that in Olympus he might reach the nectar-cup to Jove, partaking henceforth of the constant society of the immortals.

In the shape of his eagle, the Thunderer carried away his favourite from the top of mount Ida, softly bearing him in his crooked talons from earth upward to the sky. In this charming fiction has consoling fancy wrapped the untimely loss of the youth, who, in his beauty and in the prime of life, could scarcely be thought mortal, and whose vanishing from the earth, therefore, was explained as a removal to the seat of the celestials.

A modern poet, beholding with the eye of his ima-

gination the flight of Ganymede, breathes forth his feelings in the following strains:

"With what almighty charm thou beamest on me in morn's bright glow, Spring, my beloved! With thousand fold delight the sacred feeling of thy eternal warmth, in raptures infinite, fills my soul!

"Why is this arm forbidden to embrace thee! Ha! on thy bosom I lie; I long, and thy flowers, thy grass, press to my heart.

"Thou coolest the burning thirst of my bosom, lovely breeze of the morning; bringest thou with thee the notes of the nightingale, that calls to me from out the misty valley.

"I come, I come! Whither? O whither? Upward! upward it urges!

"They move downward—the clouds bend to longing love. To me! To me!

"In your lap upward! embracing, enwrapped! upward to thy bosom, all-loving father!"

GOETHE.

To fill the nectar-cup at the table of the immortals became the business of Ganymede. Before him Hebe, Juno's daughter, had administered this office until she was declared unworthy of it, having by a fall shown herself in an indecent posture, and thereby violated that gracefulness which must accompany every motion and gesture in ministering on the table of Olympus.

ATYS.

Even Cybele, the grave mother of the gods, chose her favourite. Her choice fell upon the handsome youth Atys. Forsaking his paternal fields, he hastened to the Phrygian forests, there to devote himself without reserve to the service of the chaste goddess.

Once, however, forgetting her injunction never to fall in love with any female, whether goddess or earth-born,

and suffering himself to be smitten with the charms of the beautiful Nymph Sangaris, he drew upon himself, as well as upon the object of his love, the wrath of the deity. He was punished for his offence by fits of frenzy, in one of which he maimed himself.

In one of the old fictions he is represented in a touching manner, as he is standing on the sea-shore, and looking, during a lucid interval of his mind, over the waves toward the distant land, where, in the midst of his parents and companions, he had dreamed the sweet dream of his childhood.

But the goddess approached him in her chariot drawn by lions, and again frantic fury suddenly seized him; and he hastened up the woody top of the mountain, to roam and rage until he died away in the lonely wilderness.

TITHONUS.

This handsome youth, who was a son of the Trojan King Laomedon, and a brother of Priam, went out one day with his flocks, and returned no more. Fiction explained his loss by saying, that Aurora beheld him with his flocks, and carried him off on account of his beauty.

Aurora besought Jupiter to render him immortal, and her request was granted. From the bed of Tithonus, according to poetical language, Aurora rises every morning, to open the gates of the sky. The only offspring of her marriage was Memnon, a king of Ethiopia, who took part in the Trojan war, and was slain by the hand of Achilles. On the spot where his blood was shed, a fountain is said to have burst forth, which afterwards, every year, upon the day of his death, flowed with blood instead of water. Fable asserts likewise, that when his body was burned on the funeral pile, a flock of birds, (Aves Memnoniæ or Memnonides,) flew up from his ashes, and separating into two parties, began a fight in the air, repeating it, in the neighbourhood of Troy, every year.

The happiness of Tithonus, although he was the husband of a goddess, and himself immortal, was not complete. When Aurora prayed Jupiter to grant him immortality, she forgot to pray at the same time for exemption from old age; and thus her husband, exhausted by years and infirmity, withered away, so that his voice was scarcely left to him. He himself at last prayed for his dissolution, and was transformed into a grasshopper; for the decrees of the Fates, according to which he was rendered immortal, can never be reversed.

"No happiness," exclaims an ancient bard, "no happiness is complete! Young Achilles was called away by an early death, and Tithonus consumed by a slow old age: his immortality became his burden!"

ANCHISES.

When Venus makes herself known as a goddess to Anchises, her favourite, and the father of Æneas, she addresses him in this remarkable manner: "Dismiss all fear! Thou shalt not suffer any harm because of my love. I will not supplicate for thee immortality, as Aurora did for her Tithonus, but swift age shall steal upon thee, even as upon the rest of mortal men. The Nymphs of the forest are to nurse the son whom I shall bring forth; and when he has reached manhood, then thine eyes shall feed on his godlike form. Should any one ask thee who thy son's mother was, thou art to answer, one of the nymphs that dwell upon these mountains. Beware thou boast not of my love, or the lightnings of Jove shall fall upon thy head! These words engrave deeply in thy heart, and fear the wrath of the celestials!"

ADONIS.

The love of Venus for this handsome youth was soon converted into lamentations on account of his death.

Adonis was a son of Myrrha, daughter of Cinyras, with whom she lived for a time, during the darkness of night, and without his knowledge, in incestuous connexion. When at last the father discovered the abominable deed, he pursued her with a deadly weapon, uttering imprecations and curses; but she escaped to Arabia, where, bewailing her crime, she wept repentant tears, till by the pity of the gods she was transformed into the myrrh, and thus lost the recollection of her offence.

During her transformation Adonis was born, whom the Nymphs of the forest educated, and Venus chose for her favourite. The tender goddess, not able to live without him, laid aside part of her softness for his sake, following him to the chase of the deer. She accompanied him like his faithful genius, warning him to spare his precious life, whenever he was instigated by his daring spirit to pursue the tracks of fierce and dangerous beasts. But disregarding the entreaties and warnings of the goddess, he soon ran into destruction. He met with a fierce boar, and hurled his dart at him; but the beast, not being mortally wounded, plunged his white tusks into the side of the handsome youth. He sunk, blood gushed in abundance from his wound, and when Venus, with foreboding anxiety sought her beloved Adonis, she found him in the agony of death, weltering in his blood.

In vain did she endeavour to recall him to life, and accuse with bitter complaints the cruelty of fate. Her despair changed by degrees into softer mourning, and calling forth from the ashes of her favourite the flower Anemone, she gave him thereby a kind of immortality on earth.

In honour of Adonis festivals were celebrated, during which the women bemoaned his death, and, exposing vessels filled only with such flowers as soon wither away, and which were called *little gardens of Adonis*, mourned life's short enduring blossoms. It would seem that the lamentation on the death of Adonis, which has been

general in the East, relates to a still more ancient fiction, which is only renewed in the Greek fable.

HYACINTHUS.

Fair Hyacinthus, a son of Œbalus, prince of Lacedæmon, was the favourite of Apollo. Apollo and Hyacinthus contended with each other in throwing the quoit; the fatal instrument flew from the hand of the god, and, directed in the air by Boreas, who was jealous of Apollo, struck the head of the youth, who fell dead to the ground. Apollo called forth from his ashes the flower Hyacinth; and the Lacedæmonians celebrated an annual festival at the tomb of the youth, who in flourishing life had become the prey of death.

CYPARISSUS.

Neither did this favourite of Apollo enjoy during any considerable time the light of day. The handsome stripling possessed a tame stag, which had been his delight from his childhood, and to which he was most affectionately attached. This beloved animal was shot by the hapless youth himself in the gloom of a forest, and the incident afflicted him so deeply that he became disgusted with the society of men. He wandered mourning through the loneliest shades of the forest, until death freed him from his grief. Apollo called forth from his grave the dark Cypress, which has immortalized the name of the departed, and continues to be a symbol of mourning.

LEUCOTHOE.

Although Apollo himself was the god of youth and beauty, he was seldom fortunate in his love. Leucothoë, the daughter of the Babylonian king, Orchamus, secretly loved Apollo, but their intercourse was betrayed to her severe father by the jealous Clytie, another

love of Apollo, and Orchamus buried his daughter alive. Apollo, who could not save her, caused the incense-shrub to spring from her grave, as a lasting monument both of her tenderness and of her fate.

Clytie, by her treason, had forfeited the love of the god for ever. Inconsolable at her loss, she turned her face nine days toward the sun, the shining archetype of Apollo, without taking any food or drink; until consumed at last by her grief, she became metamorphosed into the sun-flower, and in that form still turns her face constantly towards the sun.

When Daphne, the daughter of the river god Peneus, was pursued by Apollo and could not flee any farther, she besought her father to save her, and was transformed by him into a bay tree, which has ever since been sacred to Apollo, the leaves of which always crowned the temples of the god of the silver-bow.

ENDYMION.

Among all the favourites of the gods, the handsome sportsman Endymion was honoured by fiction with the highest preference, since Diana, the severe goddess of chastity, attracted by his charms, became sensible of the power of love.

On the lonely mountain Latmus, in Caria, was Endymion's abode. He pursued by moonlight the chase of the deer through the forest, until, worn out by fatigue, he sunk into the arms of sleep. Then it was that Diana, rising with her glimmering torch in the vault of heaven, beheld the slumbering youth. All was lonely and silent. She stopped the steeds that drew her car, and gliding slowly from the height of the sky down to the lips of the slumberer, she kissed them for the first time in glowing love. Thus Endymion enjoyed sleeping a happiness which had never fallen to the lot either of gods or men.

A tender feeling led the ancients to represent death

under the symbol of the sleeping Endymion; and upon their marble coffins, which enclosed the ashes of youths who had early fallen into the tomb, Diana is to be seen, descending from on high to the lips of the happy slumberer.

ACIS.

Galatea, a daughter of Nereus, loved Acis, the handsome shepherd, and the monstrous Cyclops Polypheme sued in vain for her favour. But on a certain occasion, when the monster beheld the Nymph when, at the foot of mount Ætna, she was embracing his fortunate rival, he became distracted with furious jealousy, and tearing up a rock from its roots, he raised it in the air and hurled it upon the lovers, in order to bury them under its weight. The Nymph swiftly escaped into the sea, but Acis, overwhelmed by the massy stone, sprang forth from beneath it as a purling brook, the waters of which produced a meandering stream, which bore his name.

PELEUS.

One of the happiest of mortal men was Peleus, the son of a prince the most just, the father of a hero the most renowned, and the spouse of a goddess who was loved by Jove himself.

It was Thetis, the silver-footed daughter of Nereus, who, at the persuasion of all the celestials, became the wife of happy Peleus, son of Æacus, and the mother of Achilles, who was mightier than his father.

At the wedding-feast of Peleus all the immortals were assembled, with the exception of Eris, the goddess of Discord. To avenge herself for being excluded, she threw into the splendid apartment where the gods were convened, that golden apple, the fatal inscription of which contained the original cause of the destructive war of Troy.

The happiness of Peleus was not lasting: old age, with its burdens, stole upon him; he outlived his valiant son, who had gone to Troy to return no more, and thus bent down by age and grief, the son of Æacus went to the tribunal of his father.

THE TRAGIC FICTIONS.

The ancients were fond of giving to their fictions a tragic character, a tendency which betrays itself in almost the whole series of the history of their gods and heroes. A sovereign, and, not unfrequently, capricious sway on the part of the gods, together with a blind dependence on that of men, displays itself from the very creation of the latter, and is shown in a striking light in almost every fiction.

The gods rise and fall according to their own pleasure. Every attempt of a mortal to measure himself with them, or to oppose their power, is punished in the severest manner. A too familiar intercourse with them often brings death and destruction even to their favourites. The beneficence of their power is surpassed by its terror.

Thus poor mortals must have sunk in despair under their severe doom, had they not been consoled in a manner by the consideration, that there was a Destiny, to whose decrees both gods and men were subjected.

A modern poet calls us to the tragic stage of the ancients in the following words:

"Race of men, fear the immortals! They hold the power in eternal hands, and can use it according to their pleasure. Let him who is raised by them, be the more on his guard!

"Upon cliffs and clouds are placed chairs round golden tables. If a strife ensues, the guests, scorned and outraged, fall down in nightly depths, there, fettered in the

dark, to wait in vain for a trial of justice. But they themselves remain at their golden tables in eternal feasts.

"They step from mountains to mountains; and from the gulfs of the deep, the breath of suffocated Titans steams up to them like the fragrance of offerings, a light and easy cloud.

"The rulers turn away their eyes of blessing from whole generations, refusing to behold in the grandsons the once beloved and still speaking features of their sires."

GOETHE.

THEBES.

The city of Thebes, in Greece, was the principal theatre of tragic events, which, represented on the stage, awakened in every breast a painfully sweet participation in the misery of former ages, and nobly elevated a whole nation, sympathetic in feelings, to a higher state of civilization.

CADMUS.

Agenor, whose daughter, Europa, had been carried off by Jupiter, was also the father of Cadmus, whom he commanded to seek his ravished sister in every country, and never to return without her.

Thus the furious jealousy of Juno took vengeance on Agenor's house. Like a fugitive, Cadmus wandered from country to country, and finding his sister no where, he dared not return home, but was compelled to look for an abode in a foreign land.

He came to Bœotia, in Greece, which, in obedience to the voice of an oracle, he chose for the place of his residence, although he was obliged from his first settlement in that country to struggle with many difficulties. His companions, whom he had sent to a grove sacred to Mars, to fetch water, were killed by a monstrous dragon, the guardian of the grove. After Cadmus had fought with the monster and killed it, at the command

of Minerva he sowed its teeth in the ground, from which seed men in full panoply sprang up, who, immediately turning their swords against their own body, destroyed each other to the number of five, and these assisted Cadmus in building the city of Thebes.

This fiction of the armed warriors, who had sprung up from the dragon-teeth and killed each other, contains the presage of all that misery and discord, which put swords into the hands of the descendants of Cadmus, to glut their rage on their own bowels.

Cadmus, the founder of Thebes, married Harmonia, the graceful daughter of Mars and Venus, and endeavoured to civilize the people, whom he had gathered around him, and to whom he is said to have first communicated letters, brought by him from Phœnicia. He lived with Harmonia to his latest years, and in order to ascribe to this couple a kind of immortality, fiction suffers them at last to be transformed into snakes.

The offspring of Cadmus and Harmonia, who is sometimes called also Hermione, were Ino, Agave, Autonoë, Semele, and a son, named Polydorus. All these children were persecuted by an inimical fate, or the hatred of Juno, which rested upon their father's house. Semele, the mother of Bacchus, was consumed by Jupiter's lightning. Agave married Echion, one of those five warriors who had risen from the seed of the dragon-teeth, and preserved their lives in the general slaughter of their brethren. She became the mother of Pentheus, who opposed the worship of Bacchus, and was torn in pieces by his own mother and the other votaries of the offended god. Ino was persecuted by the wrath of Juno, because she had given suck to young Bacchus. She was married to Athamas, who, seized by sudden fury, dashed her first son, Learchus, against a rock, and pursued the hapless mother, who fled with her younger son, Melicertes, to the very verge of a rock on the sea-shore. Ino, with her son in her arms, flung herself down, and both were henceforth numbered among the

deities of the sea, Ino, under the name of Leucothea, and Melicertes under that of Palæmon. Both were worshipped as benign beings, who assist sea-faring people in the dangers of their element. Autonoë, the fourth daughter of Cadmus, married Aristæus, Apollo's son, and king in Arcadia, who is said to have first taught men how to manage bees and raise honey, as well as to use the milk of animals. Autonoë became the mother of that Actæon, who was punished for the crime of beholding the bathing Diana, by being transformed into a stag and devoured by his own dogs.

Cadmus himself retired in his old age to Illyria, where his transformation took place, leaving the throne of Thebes to his son, Polydorus. Labdacus, the son of the latter, married Nycteis, the daughter of Nycteus, and became the father of Laius. At the time of his father's death, Laius was a minor, and therefore his uncle, Lycus, reigned in his place over Thebes.

Antiope, another daughter of Nycteus, beloved by Jupiter and rejected by her father, fled to Epopeus, king of Sicyon, who married her. But Lycus, having given to the dying Nycteus a solemn promise to avenge him on his daughter, killed Epopeus, and carried Antiope prisoner to Thebes, where he prepared for her the most cruel treatment, by committing her to his wife Dirce.

Antiope had borne Amphion and Zethus, sons of Jupiter, who were brought up secretly. As soon as she found means to escape, she hastened to these her sons, bidding them avenge the injury of their mother. Amphion and Zethus invaded Thebes, slew Lycus, expelled Laius, and fastened Dirce, by whom their mother had been so cruelly treated, to the horns of a wild bull, thus devoting her to a painful death.

Amphion then built the walls of Thebes with their seven gates. The persuasive eloquence with which Amphion contrived to prevail on the rude inhabitants to assist him in this undertaking, has been veiled by fiction in the fable, that he had moved the stones by the notes

of his lyre, so that they voluntarily united and formed themselves into walls and turrets.

After the death of Amphion and Zethus, the Thebans invited the expelled Laius to take charge of the government, which belonged to him by hereditary right. He returned and married Jocasta, the sister of Creon, a Theban prince.

ŒDIPUS.

It had been predicted to Laius, that he should have a son, who would be the murderer of his father. When, therefore, Jocasta became the mother of a son, Laius ordered the child to be exposed in a wild desert, and the servant who was intrusted with this commission perforated its ankles, in order to recognize it, if it ever should appear.

In this condition the child was found by Phorbas, the overseer of the herds of King Polybus, who reigned in Corinth. The latter, to whom Phorbas delivered the helpless infant, adopted it, and from its swollen feet it was named Œdipus.

The foster-parents of Œdipus kept his descent carefully concealed from him, so that, until he came to years of puberty, he believed them to be his real parents. But then some ambiguous signs raising doubts in his mind, which made him uneasy, he resolved to inquire at the oracle of Apollo. The oracle, leaving the question of his descent untouched, confined itself to the warning, never to return to his native country, because he would there slay his own father, and marry his own mother.

To escape this terrible fate, Œdipus voluntarily banished himself from Corinth, which he still thought to be his native land, and took his way towards Thebes. Thus went the hapless youth directly to meet that doom of fate which he meant to avoid. For on his journey he encountered Laius in a narrow pass, and upon showing some unwillingness to give way, a scuffle

ensued between him and the king's party, in which Œdipus unconsciously slew his father, thus making true a part of the oracle.

Upon his arrival at Thebes, Œdipus found in its vicinity the Sphinx, a monster in the shape of a lion, with the head of a maiden, the progeny of Echidna, and sent by Juno to terrify the inhabitants of the city and surrounding country. Lying on a steep rock, the monster proposed to all who were passing by, this riddle: "what kind of animal is it, that goes in the morning upon four, at noon upon two, and in the evening upon three feet?" Every one who was unable to interpret this riddle, was hurled by the Sphinx into the abyss, and hundreds had already perished in this way, ere Œdipus arrived. He came, and explained the riddle. "Man," said he, "as a child, in the morning of life creeps upon hands and feet; at the noontide of life, when strength dwells in his members, he goes upright on his two feet; and in the evening, when old age has stolen upon him, he needs a staff for his support, and goes thus, as it were, upon three feet."

Œdipus had scarcely spoken the last words, when the Sphinx flung herself down from the rock. According to another fiction, she was killed by Œdipus.

Laius was dead, and in order to get rid of the monster that desolated the country, the Thebans had promised his widow, together with the throne of Thebes, to the man who should be able to unriddle the enigma of the Sphinx. To Œdipus this apparent fortune, envied by many, was destined, and thus was the second part also of the oracle fulfilled without mercy: in taking Jocasta, the queen of Thebes, for his wife, he ignorantly married his mother, after he had slain his father.

His hard and unfriendly fate granted him yet for a short time the enjoyment of life, having drawn a veil over all these horrors. Œdipus and Jocasta had two sons, Eteocles and Polynices, and two daughters, Antigone and Ismene, their wretched father being as igno-

rant of his own fate as of the future destiny of his children.

Yet the days of this happy ignorance were not to last long. A wasting pestilence spread itself over Thebes. Œdipus himself proposed to ask the oracle, whether any man had drawn down the wrath of the gods by secret crimes, and whether the whole land was suffering for the misdeeds of an individual. His advice was followed, and the dreadful sentence fell upon himself. He determined not to cease investigating, until he should succeed in bringing the truth to light, or in setting the calumny at rest; but with every inquiry, the horrible story developed itself with additional evidence.

When at length every doubt had vanished, and Œdipus, with dreadful certainty, had found himself guilty of parricide and incest, not able to bear any longer the light of day, he blinded himself. Thus deprived of his eyes, loaded with the hatred of the immortals, he wandered until his death in foreign lands, led by the hand of his daughter Antigone. The unfortunate Jocasta strangled herself.

Eteocles and Polynices succeeded their father in the government, with this arrangement, that each of them should enjoy by turns the supreme power every other year. But neither could they escape that hostile destiny which hung over Thebes and the house of Cadmus.

ETEOCLES AND POLYNICES.

These two brothers became victims of their own discord, arising from envy and the desire of despotic power. Eteocles first entered upon the government; but when his year had expired he refused to cede the royal authority to Polynices for the succeeding year.

Upon this Polynices left Thebes, retiring to Adrastus, the ruler of Argos, who kindly received him, gave him his daughter in marriage, and promised to defend his

claim to the Theban throne to the utmost of his ability. Tydeus also, the son of Œneus, and brother to Meleager, came at that time as a fugitive to Adrastus, and to him the king of Argos married his second daughter.

The first step taken by Adrastus in order to secure for his son-in-law the portion of authority in Thebes which was due to him, was, to send Tydeus to Eteocles, that he might prevail on the usurper to share with his brother the throne of their common father. But before he could reach Thebes, Tydeus was treacherously attacked by armed men, who, at the command of Eteocles, lay in wait for him, and he returned to Argos, after narrowly escaping with his life. Upon relating this treachery, Adrastus immediately prepared war against Eteocles.

THE THEBAN WAR.

Adrastus and his two sons-in-law, Tydeus and Polynices, united in the expedition against Thebes, in which several other heroes were eager to share with them danger and glory. The valiant Capaneus, of Messene, joined them, and Hippomedon, a sister's son of Adrastus; also Parthenopæus, a handsome and brave youth from Arcadia, the son of Melanion and Atalanta.

Amphiaraus, the husband of Eriphyle, sister of Adrastus, could not for a long time be prevailed on to take part in the enterprise, because, anticipating the future, his mind foreboded to him not only the misfortune that awaited the besiegers of Thebes, but also his own inevitable death. He therefore retired to a private place, where he concealed himself from Adrastus and Polynices, until his wife, bribed by the latter with a costly necklace, discovered his hiding place, and thus Amphiaraus was obliged to unite in the enterprise against his will.

The leaders in this expedition were seven in number:

ADRASTUS,	AMPHIARAUS,
POLYNICES,	CAPANEUS,
TYDEUS,	PARTHENOPÆUS,

and HIPPOMEDON.

But on their way to Thebes they met with an accident, which involved unfavourable auspices. Hypsipyle, whose name has already been mentioned in the history of the Argonauts, had been compelled, after the departure of Jason and his companions from Lemnos, to leave her home, because she had spared the life of her father, Thoas, in that general slaughter of all the males, which had been committed in the isle of Lemnos. At the sea-shore, whither she had fled, and where she was wandering, she fell into the hands of pirates, who sold her as a slave to Lycurgus, king of Nemæa, and there she became the nurse of the king's little son, Opheltes.

At that time, the seven heroes, with their army, were passing through the dominions of Lycurgus, and they found the royal daughter of Thoas, with her little nursling, in a wood. Hastening here to point out a fountain to the Greeks, who were exhausted with thirst, she left the little Opheltes alone on the turf; and when she returned to the spot, the child in the mean time had been killed by a snake. The Greeks, confounded and crestfallen at this accident, celebrated the funeral of the child in a splendid manner, and founded in honour of him, under the name of Archemorus, sacred games, which afterwards, at certain periods, were repeated at Nemæa.

After having completed these funeral rites, the heroes proceeded on their way, and arrived under the walls of Thebes. Here the seven leaders distributed their army around the seven gates, so that each of the heroes with his troop was to block up one of the gates, and thus take the city, if possible, by a regular siege.

To oppose each of the leaders in the army of Adrastus, Eteocles placed within the walls one whom he re-

garded as his equal: against Tydeus, Melanippus; against Capaneus, Polyphontes; against Hippomedon, Hyperbius; Actor against Parthenopæus; Lasthenes against Amphiaraus; and he stationed himself against Polynices, his brother.

If the besiegers were animated by their just cause, by hatred against the usurper Eteocles, and by confidence in their superior power, the besieged, on the other hand, were urged to the most desperate struggle by a still more powerful motive, the fear of hunger. They made a furious sally, and a battle, equally fatal to both parties, ensued. Hippomedon and Parthenopæus fell under the swords of the enemy; Capaneus, who had mounted the walls, was killed by a flash of lightning; Tydeus fell under the hand of Melanippus; Eteocles and Polynices, the two unnatural brothers, killed each other in single combat; Amphiaraus was swallowed up by the earth; and Adrastus owed his life only to the swiftness of his good horse Arion, whose sire was the ruler of the waves.

The sovereignty of Thebes devolved now on Creon, the brother of Jocasta. He ordered the corpse of Eteocles to be buried with the usual rites and due honours, but he commanded, on pain of death, that the bodies of Polynices and his fallen friends should remain unburied, a prey to the fowls of the air.

Antigone, the faithful daughter of Œdipus, prompted by her sisterly love, notwithstanding the interdict of Creon, and the danger to which she exposed her life, stole out of the city in a moon-light night, and with her own hands covered the body of her brother with sand.

Her disobedience to the command of the tyrant was discovered, and she was condemned to die, by being buried alive; but she prevented a public execution and a cruel death by strangling herself.

Hæmon, Creon's son, who had tenderly loved this victim of his father's cruelty, upon finding Antigone dead in her prison, plunged his sword in his breast;

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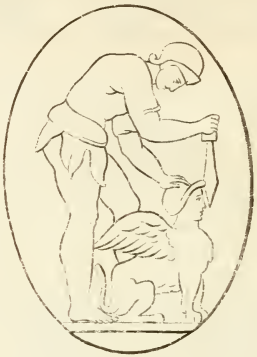

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neither did Hæmon's mother survive the loss of her beloved son. Thus stood Creon, bereft of all those who had been related to him by the sacred ties of nature, accusing his destiny!

In the mean time Adrastus had solicited the assistance of Theseus, who conquered Thebes, and forced the inhabitants to surrender all the slain bodies that belonged to the army of Adrastus, in order to their interment with solemn funeral rites.

The misfortunes by which this war had been accompanied, were insufficient to extinguish the enmity which subsisted among the sons of the fallen heroes. Ten years after it burst forth in a new war, which, from its being carried on by the descendants of the former leaders, was called the war of the Epigones.

Creon was succeeded on the throne of Thebes by Laodamas, a son of Eteocles. Thersander, the son of Polynices, assisted by the sons of those heroes who had been slain in the former war, together with Ægialeus, the son of Adrastus, undertook a new expedition against Thebes, conquered Laodamas, and seized upon the royal authority, of which his father, Polynices, had been unjustly deprived. Laodamas fled to Illyria, which had formerly been also the asylum of Cadmus. In the first Theban war, Adrastus was the only one of the leaders who escaped; in the second, his son, Ægialeus, was the only one who fell.

Upon one of the rarest and most precious monuments of ancient carving, which is preserved in a German museum of antiquities, a representation is to be seen of the heroes, who, under the command of Adrastus, besieged Thebes. The group consists only of five persons, under each of whom the name is engraved, and both figures and letters prove the high antiquity of the work. The heroes represented are, Adrastus, Tydeus, Polynices, Amphiaraus, and Parthenopæus. They seem to be assembled to hold a new council on their affairs, after a defeat. In the midst of them Amphiaraus sits with

dejected countenance, foreseeing his own death, as well as that of his associates. Opposite to him, Polynices is sitting on another chair, leaning his head upon his hand, as if sunk in deep, melancholy musing. On the side of Amphiaraus appears Parthenopæus, seated also on a chair, with his hands drawn round his knees, in a quiet and thoughtful posture. Adrastus has risen from his seat, and seems willing to hasten again to the field of battle, being armed with a shield and spear. Tydeus, who is also armed, is following him, yet with less spirit in his countenance, and with down-cast look. In this beautiful group a gradation of feelings and inward emotion, as it were, is expressed, from Polynices, whose head is resting on his hand, to Adrastus, who is courageously hastening to the battle-ground.

THE PELOPIDÆ.

Pelops, a son of that Tantalus, who, after he had been raised by the gods even to their own assembly, was hurled down by them into the depths of Tartarus, came from Phrygia to Œnomaus, king of Pisa, in Greece, by whom he was hospitably received. Struck by the charms of the beautiful Hippodamia, the king's daughter, Pelops requested her from her father as his wife. But it had been predicted to Œnomaus, that he should be deprived of his life by his son-in-law, and he was therefore accustomed to propose to every suitor for his daughter, to contend with him in a chariot race, putting to death all whom he overtook during the course.

Pelops, by alluring promises, prevailed upon Myrtilus, the charioteer of Œnomaus, to adjust the king's chariot in such a manner as to make it break down in the middle of the course. The king was thrown out and lost his life. Pelops married Hippodamia, and, unwilling to keep his promise to Myrtilus, he threw him unawares from a rock into the sea, which derived from him the name of Myrtæan.

But after this act of injustice and cruelty, one misfortune followed another in the house of Pelops, although his power increased to such a degree that the whole peninsula of Greece was called after him Peloponnesus.

Pelops had two sons by Hippodamia, Atreus and Thyestes. These deprived of life their step-brother, Chrysippus, the son of Pelops and Astyoche, because they could not bear their father's love for this son. Hippodamia, whom Pelops supposed to have instigated to this murder, died by her own hand, while her sons, Thyestes and Atreus, fled from the wrath of their father.

Atreus betook himself to Eurystheus, king of Mycene, who gave him his daughter, Aërope, in marriage, and after whose death he mounted the throne of Mycene.

Thyestes, who had followed Atreus, partook of the fortune which the latter had experienced in a foreign land; but he soon brought a reproach upon his brother's bed, by clandestine intercourse with Aërope, during the absence of her husband, the result of which was the birth of two sons.

As soon as Atreus became apprised of this scandalous affair, he expelled his unnatural brother, together with his two sons, from his dominions. Thyestes, breathing revenge, contrived to get a son of Atreus into his power, and, after having him brought up as his own child, and instilled into his youthful heart a furious hatred against Atreus, he sent him away to commit a murder, at which the sun veils his face.

But the youth was unsuccessful in his attempt. Upon the discovery of his design, he died under the most cruel tortures; and Atreus learned too late, that his own son, instead of his brother's, had been put to death at his command. Brooding now over a still deeper revenge, he feigned reconciliation with his brother; and having at length persuaded him by various marks of kindness and fraternal affection, to visit him at Mycene, and to bring his two sons with him, he had his two nephews secretly killed, their flesh roasted and brought on

the table, at which their father sat. After Thyestes had eaten of the food, prepared from the flesh of his own children, Atreus cast their heads and hands before his eyes. "The sun," says the fiction, "on beholding this scene, swiftly turned back his course."

Although the crimes hitherto related are sufficient to freeze the very heart-blood of a man, and to affright the reader's imagination, yet the wickedness committed in the house of Pelops is not yet at an end. Thyestes had incestuous intercourse with his daughter, Pelopia, the fruit of which was a son, whose name was Ægisthus, and who, when he had attained the years of manhood, murdered Atreus, and expelled his sons, Agamemnon and Menelaus, from Mycene, where Thyestes usurped the royal throne.

The fugitive sons of Atreus found a reception at the court of Tyndarus, king of Lacedæmon, where each of them married a daughter of their host, Agamemnon Clytemnestra, and Menelaus the beautiful Helena, who afterwards brought wo throughout Greece, and destruction on Troy. The two brothers avenged the death of their father, Atreus, expelled Thyestes once more from Mycene, and Agamemnon took the reins of government in his father's dominions, while Menelaus succeeded their father-in-law in the government of Sparta.

Menelaus and Helena had no children, but Agamemnon had by Clytemnestra two daughters, Iphigenia and Electra, and a son, Orestes.

When Agamemnon afterwards took the chief command of the army, destined to call Troy to an account for the offence which his brother, Menelaus, had suffered from Paris; forgiving Ægisthus the murder of his father, he became reconciled to him, and even intrusted him with the care of Clytemnestra and his house, during his absence. Ægisthus, however, abused this ill placed confidence, misleading Clytemnestra to infidelity, and bringing ruin upon her husband. For

when Agamemnon returned to Mycene, hoping, after a life of trouble, and an absence of ten years, to enjoy the remainder of his days in quiet and domestic happiness, he was murdered by the adulterous couple, Ægisthus and Clytemnestra.

With regard to Agamemnon's children,—Iphigenia was to have been sacrificed on entering upon the expedition against Troy, to appease the wrath of the gods, but was rescued by Diana, who carried her to Tauris, where she became a priestess in her temple; Orestes, whose life was threatened with great danger from the hands of Ægisthus, was secretly sent by his sister Electra to Strophius, who was king of Phocis, and husband to Agamemnon's sister; Electra herself remained at home, exposed to the abuse of an unnatural mother.

After the violent death of her husband, Clytemnestra, neither fearing the gods, nor regarding what is holy to men, married Ægisthus, and put the royal crown of Mycene on his execrable head. But destiny had already decreed the punishment of that guilty couple, although it was to be executed only by means of a new crime. In Orestes, Agamemnon's son, grew up an avenger both of his father's death and his mother's infamy. A false report, designedly circulated, had announced him as dead, and while Ægisthus and Clytemnestra rejoiced in the thought of being rid of him, Orestes was planning their destruction. As soon as he felt strength enough in his arm to meet a foe with his sword, he went to Mycene, and slew the murderer of his father, not sparing her who was his helpmate in committing the crime, his own mother. But on account of this horrible deed, Orestes was pursued by the Furies wherever he went: that is to say, his own conscience would not allow him any rest, suffered him not to be reconciled to himself, until an oracle of Apollo promised him alleviation of his torments, if he would go to Tauris, and carry off thence the statue of Diana to Greece.

Orestes had been brought up with Pylades, the son

of King Strophius, at Phocis, and both were so intimately and inseparably united by the tie of friendship, that their union became proverbial in antiquity, and is so even in our own times. This faithful friend, Pylades, who had never left Orestes during all his sufferings, was now also his companion on the voyage to Tauris. It was there an old and barbarous custom, to bring to the severe goddess, who was the tutelary deity of the country, and whose statue Orestes was to carry away, human offerings, a custom which was particularly dangerous to all the strangers that arrived in the island. Orestes and Pylades, therefore, had no sooner arrived, than they were made prisoners, and doomed to be separated for ever, by the sacrifice of one of them to Diana. And in that trying hour it was, when they received the sentence of the high-priest, that each of these friends offered his life, to save the life of the other, in a contest, pleasing in the sight of the gods, and worthy of heavenly assistance.

Orestes, who had recognised his sister, Iphigenia, the priestess of Diana, made himself known to her; and she found means not only to bring the statue of the goddess on board her brother's ship, but also to rescue both the friends, and to fly with them to Greece. The oracle of Apollo proved true: the Furies ceased to torment Orestes, who henceforth reigned quietly over Mycene; the wrath of the immortals, which had borne so long and so heavily upon the house of Pelops, seemed now to abate.

A modern poet, the author of "*Iphigenia in Tauris*,"* gives to the ancient representation a very ingenious and beautiful turn, which deserves to be mentioned here. According to him, the oracle of Apollo promises tranquillity to Orestes, *if he would carry the sister, who remained in the sanctuary at Tauris against her will, to Greece.* Orestes, who did not know that

* Goethe.

his sister Iphigenia lived in Tauris, was necessarily led to apply the word *sister* to Diana, Apollo's sister, who was often designated by this appellation by way of distinction. But when afterwards Orestes unexpectedly found his own sister, who remained indeed against her will in Tauris, he was allowed to apply the word *sister* to her; and Iphigenia was neither obliged to steal the statue of Diana, nor to commit a treason against Thoas, the king of the island, who had always been her benefactor, and who dismissed her in a kind and friendly manner.

TROY.

Among the countries which lay without the boundaries of Greece, Troy was the principal theatre of tragic events. They have found a narrator, who has alike rendered their memory and his own name immortal. "A day was to come in which Ilium should fall, and Priam's royal race be extinguished." This was the decree of Destiny, against which neither gods nor men could prevail; all circumstances must concur to bring about its accomplishment.

Eris, the goddess of Discord, enraged at being the only one of the celestials who had not received an invitation to the marriage of Peleus with the silver-footed Thetis, contrived to throw into the apartment where the banquet was celebrated, a golden apple, which bore the inscription, "destined to the fairest." Juno, Venus, and Minerva, were soon unanimously recognised as the worthiest, among all the goddesses, to contend for that prize.

None of the gods being willing to undertake the office of awarding it, and thus of incurring the risk of inevitably giving mortal offence to two powerful beauties of Olympus, the three contending goddesses were at last referred by Jupiter to Paris, the son of Priam, king of Troy. Paris was a simple shepherd on mount

Ida, who had, by the command of his father, been exposed as soon as he was born, because an oracle had foretold that through him Troy should be burnt. The shepherds on mount Ida brought him up tenderly, and named him Paris. The three goddesses, consenting to refer their contest to his decision, appeared before him on the top of mount Ida, each of them endeavouring in private to influence him by the promise of such gifts as she thought most likely to bias his judgment. The majestic Juno, while she haughtily demanded the prize as her right, signified her intention to confer the greatest dignities and riches upon the giver of it. Minerva promised the young shepherd to bestow upon him the pure and lasting pleasures with which wisdom rewards her votaries. At last Venus advanced: "I will give thee a wife," said she, "whose exquisite beauty will induce mortals to say, were Venus to descend upon the earth, she would appear in such a form as Helena's." The shepherd awarded the golden apple to Venus.

From this time Juno as well as Minerva bore a deep and irreconcilable rancour in their bosoms, not only against Paris, but also against the whole family of Priam, while Venus was intent on keeping her word with Paris.

The most beautiful woman on earth was Helena, the daughter of Jupiter and Leda, and foster-daughter of Tyndarus, king of Lacedæmon. She was possessed of such transcendent loveliness, that her fame spread over all Greece, and drew many kings to the court of Tyndarus, in the hope of getting this wonder of beauty for a spouse. While Tyndarus, on the one hand, was flattered at seeing his daughter, and, by consequence, himself, who had the disposal of her, so highly honoured; on the other, he entertained the well grounded fear, that, since but one of the suitors could obtain her, the now pretended friendship of all the others would change into hatred and revenge, which might become dangerous to him.

In this dilemma he consulted Ulysses, King of Ithaca, who was renowned for his prudence throughout all Greece. Ulysses advised him to assemble all the suitors of Helena, and require of them a solemn oath, that they would acquiesce in her choice, and protect the preferred lover with their united power, against every one who might pretend to dispute with him the quiet possession of his rightfully gained treasure.

Tyndarus followed this advice; the assembled kings submitted to his proposal, and Helena chose among them the fair Menelaus, brother to Agamemnon, king of Mycene. They lived together for several years in peace and happiness, till Paris, who had quitted the shepherds' life, and, as an acknowledged prince of Troy, re-entered the family of Priam, came in quest of adventures, but secretly led by the influence of Venus, to Greece, where he was kindly and hospitably received at Sparta by Menelaus. Paris repaid this kindness with the blackest ingratitude. He persuaded Helena to leave her husband, and to follow him over the sea to Troy. While Menelaus was absent from home, the guilty purpose was carried into effect; but on their voyage, the presaging sea-god Nereus, rising during a calm to the top of the waves, foretold to them the misery which they would bring upon themselves, as well as upon the whole land whither they were repairing; and the prediction did not remain long unfulfilled.

Menelaus, deprived of an adored wife, was incensed against the ravisher, and caused all Greece to re-echo his complaints against Priam's treacherous son. The kings were reminded of the oath they had taken, and hastened to act according to it. Every soul was exasperated against Paris, not only on account of his having carried off a citizen of a foreign country, but particularly because he had violated the sacred rights of hospitality in so gross and provoking a manner. Ambassadors were immediately dispatched to Priam, to complain of the offence perpetrated against all Greece,

and to reclaim the ravished Helena; but the old, hapless king, influenced by the machinations of his degenerate son, and by his own paternal love, suffered the ambassadors to return to Greece, without granting their just demand.

The kings of Greece, with Agamemnon at their head, then formed a coalition, swearing to overthrow the city of Troy. Every one of them fitted out and manned as many ships as he had to dispose of, and in the harbour of *Aulis* the whole fleet assembled. The chief leaders in this war, almost all of whom have already been mentioned, were,

Agamemnon, king of Mycene,
Menelaus, king of Sparta,
Nestor, king of Pylus,
Diomedes, the son of Tydeus,
Ajax, the son of Telamon,
Ulysses, king of Ithaca,
Achilles, the son of Peleus,
Patroclus, the son of Menœtius,
Podalirius, Machaon, } the sons of Æsculapius,
Philoctetes, the last companion of Hercules,
Sthenelus, the son of Capaneus,
Thersander, the son of Polynices, and
Idomeneus, the grand-son of Minos.

The whole fleet lay a long time assembled before Aulis, waiting in vain for a fair wind. Diana was incensed against Agamemnon for having killed a stag that was sacred to her, and the angry goddess demanded through the mouth of the augur Calchas, Iphigenia, Agamemnon's daughter, for a propitiatory sacrifice. Iphigenia, accompanied by her mother, was conducted to the altar of the indignant goddess, and the sacrificial knife already flashed in the hand of the priest, when Diana involved her in a cloud, and transported her to Tauris: in her place a roe stood at the altar.

After Diana was propitiated, the Greek fleet steered

with a fair wind out of the harbour of Aulis, and landed safely on the shores of Troas, where siege was immediately laid to the city of Troy.

Meanwhile, Priam was spending the remainder of a long and peaceful life in the midst of his numerous family. The industrious citizens, whose commerce flourished, lived in affluence and tranquility. The husbandman exulted in the hope that his labours would meet with their due reward. In fine, that harmony so beneficial, so requisite in society, prevailed in Troas.

An army of Greeks, however, made its appearance, and universal confusion ensued. Fear now took possession of every breast; the inhabitants of the country hastily sought refuge in the city, the gates of which were instantly closed. The brave Hector flew to the ramparts; his example encouraged the most disheartened; they gather round him; follow him in every sally, and for ten years they resist every effort of the Greeks.

All the celestials took part in this war, espousing either the side of the Trojans, or that of the Greeks. Imperial Jove sat on the top of mount Ida, holding the balance in his mighty hand, and directing the fate of the combatants. In favour of the Greeks were the majestic Juno, the queen of the heavens; the severe Pallas Athene, the offended goddess of Wisdom; Neptune, the lord of the waves; Vulcan, the god of fire; and Mercury, the swift messenger of the immortals. On the side of the Trojans stood Venus, Apollo, Diana, and Latona. Mars, as the god of war itself, went from one army to the other, fighting now with the Greeks, and now with the Trojans.

The chief cause of the detention of the Greeks before the city of Troy during ten years, without being able to get possession of it, was the wrath of Achilles against Agamemnon, who had deprived him of his slave, the fair Brisëis. King Agamemnon refused to restore the beautiful Chrysëis, who, as a part of the booty made in

the country of Troas, had fallen to his lot, to her father, who was a priest of Apollo, and had come to the camp of the Greeks, supplicating for the release of his daughter, and offering an ample ransom. Agamemnon rejected the offered ransom, refused to release Chrysëis on any terms, and loaded, moreover, the wretched old man, who stood before him praying for the restitution of his only and beloved child, with ignominious words and menaces. Perceiving that his entreaties were ineffectual, the priest lifted up his hands to Apollo, praying him to avenge the injury done his servant, and to punish the cruelty of the Greeks. Apollo heard the supplication of the wretched father, and highly incensed against Agamemnon and all his followers, he shot several of his arrows into the camp of the Greeks, thus causing a pestilence, which swept away multitudes of the people.

At length it was revealed by the mouth of Calchas, the priest and augur, through whose guilt and for what cause the people of Greece were suffering. When Agamemnon, at the entreaties of all his allies, could not longer refuse to restore Chrysëis to her father, he demanded to be indemnified for his loss by another part of the booty, which was already divided. Achilles, indignant at his pride and selfishness, rebuked him with great severity, and, when Agamemnon threatened him, he was even on the point of drawing his sword against the chief, but was restrained by the goddess of Wisdom, who grasped his yellow locks.

Agamemnon, still more enraged at the opposition on the part of Achilles, insisted with the greater obstinacy on receiving an indemnity for the loss of his slave, and, to avenge himself upon the bold son of Thetis, he carried off Brisëis by force out of his tent. Upon this act of violence and injustice, Achilles retired to the lonely shore of the sea, and stretching out his hand to his mother, Thetis, implored her to avenge him upon the haughty king of Mycene, by inducing the gods to assist

the Trojans, and to withdraw their aid from the Greeks; so that while he declined taking part in the war, these might feel the want of his strong arm, and experience the effects of his wrath.

Thetis heard the prayers of her son, and, hastening to the throne of Jupiter, besought the ruler of gods and men to bestow victory upon the Trojans, and thus to avenge her son on proud Agamemnon and the ungrateful Greeks; reminding him, at the same time, of that assistance which he had once received from her, when his sovereignty was endangered by a conspiracy of the other deities. Jupiter complied with the request of his benefactress. Prohibiting all the gods in the strictest terms from assisting in any manner the besiegers of Troy, he bestowed upon Hector, the chief of the besieged, who made frequent and successful sallies, immortal glory.

Too late did Agamemnon repent of the offence which he had given to the valiant Achilles; too late did all the Greeks repent of having suffered this offence to be committed against one, who alone was able to save them from destruction by his mighty arm. Their attempts to reconcile Achilles, and the entreaties by which they endeavoured to induce him to take up again his good spear in their behalf, were all in vain. He had closed his ears to all their prayers, as well as their promises; his resolution was not to be shaken. At last, however, when the Trojans, after they had vanquished the Greeks in a bloody battle, assailed their camp, and were even casting fire into their ships, Achilles, moved by the prayers and tears of his beloved friend, Patroclus, permitted him to array himself in his own armour, and to lead on a troop of his Myrmidons against the enemies.

When the Trojans beheld the armour of the hero, they supposed that the wearer was Achilles himself, and fled like a flock of sheep at the approach of the wolf. Although the death of Patroclus was decreed by Destiny, yet he was permitted, before he fell, to gain a never

fading glory; for Sarpedon, Jupiter's son, together with many other valiant heroes, were subdued by his sword, and went down to the dominions of Pluto. But his own fate was fast approaching. Apollo stood behind him, covered with night, and struck him with his broad hand on his neck and shoulders, so that his eyes grew dim. The god then pulled from his head the helmet, which rolled under the feet of the horses; he broke the heavy spear, mounted with brass, in his hand, and stripped him of his breast-plate. While Patroclus, stunned, could scarce support himself on his staggering knees, Hector gave him the deadly stroke. The soul of Patroclus went down to Orcus, complaining of her fate, because she had left behind her the strength of youth.

When Achilles heard of the death of his beloved Patroclus, his wrath against Agamemnon and the Greeks at once gave place to nobler feelings. His soul was filled with distress and grief, and his eyes wept tears of love over the body of his departed friend. In this mournful situation he was found by his mother, who had risen from the deep, where his lamentations had reached her ears. Although she made known to him, after her parental consolations had in some measure quieted his soul, that Hector's death would not long precede his own, yet he swore to avenge the early departure of his friend, regardless of the destiny that awaited himself. Thetis, seeing her son firm in his resolution, endeavoured to comfort and animate him for the short remainder of his days; she promised and brought to him new armour, of Vulcan's workmanship, and upon his reconciliation with Agamemnon, who had restored to him the fair Brisëis, he rushed forth into the din of battle, to avenge the death of his friend, and to bring sadness and grief over Priam and his whole house.

Hector, thine hour is at hand! Cover thy head, old Priam, for the best and bravest of thy numerous offspring, who has hitherto defended the walls of Troy,

and Ilium, and thee, shall now fall! Pluck off thy grey hair, O Hecuba, mother of many sons and many daughters, for the nearest and dearest to thy heart of all thy children, he who has been the protector of thy house, thy daughters, and thyself, is now to enter on the solitary journey to those mansions, whither soon to follow him is thine only consolation! Go into thy chamber, Andromache, best of wives and tenderest of mothers, there to weep and moan over the loss of the best of husbands, and the tenderest of fathers, who shall henceforth defend thee no longer, nor thy little son, Astyanax! Go, thine own Hector must fall!

When Achilles appeared on the battle-ground, shaking his mighty spear, and thundering like a lion, the Trojans, terror-struck, fled back in confusion to the city. Hector alone stood firm, to await the son of a goddess, and to enter with him on the decisive combat. He stood firm, till Achilles was near enough to make him see the divine armour in which he was clad; at that moment sudden consternation seized him, and he fled. Three times was he chased round the walls of Troy by the son of Thetis: so long had Apollo strengthened his knees. But when he was running round the fourth time, Jupiter took up the balance, put into each scale a lot of death, and the lot of Hector sunk down toward Orcus. Then Apollo left him to his destiny.

The heroes fought. Hector fell; and Achilles, fastening his feet to his chariot, dragged him in triumph through dust and water and stones, round the city of Troy. The old and wretched parents of the fallen hero, stood upon the walls, and beheld this melancholy spectacle. Hecuba filled the air with her lamentations, and Priam stretched forth his trembling hands, as if entreating forbearance.

In the camp of the Greeks the funeral of Patroclus was celebrated with great pomp and public games of combat, while Hector's corpse lay there unburied. In order to procure for his body also the funeral rites, and

thus to bring Hector's soul to her rest in the Elysian fields, the aged Priam himself, conducted by Mercury, came at night into the Greek camp, and, entering the tent of Achilles, he threw himself at his feet, embracing his knees, and conjuring him by the memory of his old father, Peleus, to surrender to him the body of his son Hector, that he might procure for it an honourable interment.

This picture of old Priam, as he is embracing the knees of the man who had slain his dearest son, the support of his old age, and the defender of his city and his throne, and supplicating for his son's body, is one of the most tragic, and at the same time one of the most touching objects, which the annals of mankind exhibit. There is another scene, belonging to the same history, which is equally affecting, and deserves to be placed along with it. It is Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, who, through the power of her presaging mind, foresees all the misery which hangs over Troy, her parents, and herself; but finding nowhere any credit and belief, and therefore nowhere any means of preventing that misery, wanders in lonely places, lamenting in despair her cruel fate.

The distress of Priam reminds Achilles of his own aged father, and touched by the thought that he also would shortly be obliged to lament his departed son, he grants the request of Priam, who, with the corpse of Hector, hastens back to Troy, where with his whole people he celebrates the funeral in the most solemn manner.

Achilles himself was soon overtaken by his destiny. After having performed several other glorious deeds, the fatal arrow, shot by Paris, and directed by Apollo, wounded him in the *heel*, the only vulnerable part of his body, and the wound proved fatal. On account of his armour, the present of Vulcan, an unfortunate contention ensued among the leaders of the Greek army. It was at length awarded to Ulysses, king of Ithaca, at which Ajax, who, after Achilles, was the most valiant

hero among the Greeks, became so displeased and offended, that he put a period to his life.

Paris did not long boast of his victory over Achilles. He was killed by Philoctetes with one of those arrows which Hercules had dipt in the blood of the Lernæan hydra, and left as an inheritance to his friend. The downfall of Troy, and the overthrow of Priam's ancient realm, now drew nearer and nearer. Yet, after all the blood that had been shed, the walls of the city, and the castle of Ilium, were not to be conquered by power, but by artifice.

At the advice of the crafty Ulysses, a colossean horse of wood was constructed, in whose belly several of the most courageous heroes concealed themselves, while the Greek army went on board their ships, feigning to have left the coasts of Troas for ever. Sinon only remained, who, when he was discovered by the Trojans, made them believe, by means of a well studied tale, that he was a fugitive, persecuted by his own countrymen, the Greeks, and that he was on his way to implore the assistance and protection of the magnanimous Trojans. He told them, at the same time, as an important secret, that the wooden horse, at which the Trojans looked with much astonishment, not knowing for what purpose it was left, had been built by the Greeks with the view of propitiating Minerva, because they had taken from the city the Palladium, the statue of the goddess, which was looked upon as the pledge of safety for the realm of Troy. Sinon acted his part so well as to disperse almost every doubt respecting the truth of his account; and if some distrust still remained in the breast of one or two, it was dispelled by a singular event, which happened quite seasonably to support the fictitious tale of the treacherous Greek.

Laocoon, an old Trojan priest, who had heard that his fellow-citizens were about to transport the dangerous gift, which the sons of Danaus had left behind them, to the temple of Pallas Athene, in the middle of the

city, hastened before the gates, and conjured them to reflect on what they were about to do. At the close of his speech he drove his spear against the side of the horse, and a feeble clash of arms resounded from the belly of it. Laocoon then went with his sons to a neighbouring temple of Neptune, to offer a sacrifice to the ruler of the waves, to thank him for the preservation of his native city, and to implore his farther assistance. There, while he was preparing the offerings, two enormous serpents, which came from the isle of Tenedos over the sea, suddenly made their appearance; and ere the wretched father could warn his sons, or fly with them, the reptiles had already coiled their immense folds around the tender bodies of both the youths. Laocoon, rushing desperately upon the monsters, to save his children, became himself entangled within the coils of the snakes, and father and sons, beholding their mutual agonies, without being able to assist each other, or to help themselves, died a doubly painful death.

An antique marble statue, representing Laocoon with his two sons, as they are involved in the folds of the reptiles, and striving in the agonies of death to free themselves, has reached our own times. In this statue art celebrates her highest triumph. The whole group, as well as every single part of it, and particularly the expression of mingled feelings in the faces of father and sons, are of wonderful excellence. During the imperial government of France, the statue of Laocoon, together with its rival sisters, the statues of the Belvidere Apollo and the Medicean Venus, was to be seen in the great museum at Paris; afterwards they were taken back again to Rome.

The fate of Laocoon was considered by the Trojans as a punishment inflicted upon him by the gods, for violating that present which was left by the departing Greeks to Minerva, and was destined to be the substitute of the Palladium, carried off from her temple. There was now no longer any doubt of the pretended

fugitive Sinon's sincerity, and of the truth of all that he had related. The infatuated people accordingly hastened, with exultation and in triumph, to convey the new pledge of safety, the new Palladium, into the city; boys and girls were delighted to touch the cords by which the horse was drawn. When it was found that the gate of the city was not large enough for its admittance, part of the walls was broken down, and the fatal horse stood in the midst of Troy.

Rejoicing at their deliverance from the dangerous enemies who had afflicted them with many woes for ten years past, the hapless inhabitants of the city now abandoned themselves freely to wine, and dance, and joy, until a late hour of the night. At last, while they were buried in sleep and intoxication, when midnight had spread its sable mantle over the country, the Greek fleet, which had concealed itself behind the isle of Tenedos, landed again on the shores of Troas. Sinon, the treacherous Sinon, put a ladder to the wooden horse, and embowelled it by opening a hidden door in its belly. Thus a number of Greek heroes were already in the streets of Troy. They gave a sign to those on board the ships by a burning torch; then they opened the gates of the city, after they had easily overpowered the drunken guard, and in rushed the Greek army: the last day of Ilium and of Priam's old realm had passed! While sleep pressed upon the eye-lids of the greater part of the wretched inhabitants, those few who, at the first alarm, endeavoured to resist the enemy, or to escape, were slaughtered in the streets. The enraged Greek soldiery immolated to their fury whatever met their eye. They set fire to the four corners of the city, and while it was raging they entered the houses in search of prey and murder. Unhappy Priam was slain at the very altar of his domestic temple, where he had sought an asylum. Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, revered in his fury no god, no altar, no asylum: he plunged his sword in the old man's heart. Priam had seen almost all his sons be-

come the prey of the sword during that unfortunate war; happy for him, that his eyes could not behold the fate of the aged Hecuba, his queen, of his daughters, and of Andromache, Hector's noble spouse. They were all carried away captives, to weep as slaves in a foreign land.

Thus sunk the glory of Ilium, and Priam's royal race was extinguished!

The Greeks, on their return to their native land, were obliged to atone for their dearly bought victory with many misfortunes; and even the greater part of those who reached their home in safety, found their domestic affairs, during a ten years' absence, so changed and disordered, that the remainder of their days, instead of being passed in peace and tranquillity, were embittered by various calamities.

The hardest fate befel "the sufferer Ulysses," who, in addition to the ten years during which he had lain before the walls of Troy, was now doomed to wander about on the sea another ten years, before he was permitted to behold again the shores of Ithaca. In the island of Sicily, he, and part of his companions, fell into the hands of the Cyclops *Polyphœme*, from whom he escaped with great danger, and only by means of his inexhaustible cunning, after several of his friends had been devoured by the monster. Out of the still, treacherous harbour of the *Læstrygons*, a gigantic nation, that fed on human flesh, he escaped with the loss of all his ships but one, with which he landed on the isle of Circe, the sorceress, who transformed his companions into various animals. After having lived with her, unaffected by her magic potion, a whole year, he was obliged to descend into the dominions of Pluto. When he had safely reached again the higher regions, it became necessary, in searching for his native island, that he should pass by the dangerous Sirens. Forewarned, however, by Circe of the evils to which he would subject himself by listening to them, he made his companions

stop their ears with wax, and had himself fastened to the mast of the ship, enjoining his followers not to unbind him, even if he himself should desire it. Thus he passed in safety the abode of the Sirens, hearing without danger the enchanting harmony of their voices. Then was Ulysses obliged to navigate the narrow, perilous straight, that lies between the gulf of Charybdis and the rock Scylla, a pass so difficult, that its danger has given rise to the saying, "if he avoids Charybdis, he is sure to be wrecked on Scylla." Having escaped this danger also, he landed on an island, where, against his orders, his companions killed several oxen sacred to the sun. Apollo complained of the crime at the throne of Jupiter, and as soon as the ship of Ulysses had again reached the open sea, she was dashed to pieces by Jove's thunderbolts. The whole crew perished. Ulysses was the only person that survived, and he saved himself by swimming to the isle of Calypso. The Nymph promised him immortality, if he would remain with her and become her husband; but the desire to see once more his native land, his wife Penelope, and his son Telemachus, was a stronger inducement with the hero, than all the felicity which Calypso could offer him. After he had been detained by her a long time, she was at length, by the command of the gods, obliged to dismiss him. Once more he surrendered his life to the mercy of the waves on a raft, which he had built with his own hands; and he was now approaching the shores of Ithaca, when Neptune cast his eye upon the bold navigator. The god, incensed at him for having bereft Polypheme, who was a son of his, of his only eye, raised a sudden storm, by which Ulysses' raft was cast back into the open sea and upset. Exposed in a wild tempest as a prey to the raging billows, still Ulysses despaired not. Clinging to a rock, he suffered the storm to pass over, and then swam to the neighbouring island of the Phæacians, where he was hospitably received and kindly treated. From this place he was

at last sent over to Ithica, there to rest from so many sufferings and dangers in the arms of love. He found his old father, Laertes, still alive; he found his faithful wife, Penelope, and his only and dearly beloved son, Telemachus. The first care of Ulysses, as soon as he saw himself restored to his native country and his kingdom, was to punish those haughty and insolent suitors, who, during his absence, had importuned the faithful Penelope with their impertinent addresses, and shamelessly consumed his property in their daily banquets. With the assistance of his son, Telemachus, and his faithful herdsman, Eumæus, he killed them in the porch of his palace, in the midst of their revelry. After this act of retribution, cruel indeed, but quite in the spirit of the times, he reigned quietly in Ithaca until his death.

NIOBE.

Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus, and wife of Amphion, king of Thebes, prided herself in being the mother of seven hardy sons, and as many beautiful daughters, and to such an excess was she led by her maternal exultation, as to scorn Latona, and to scoff at the veneration of her, who had brought forth only one son and one daughter.

Incensed at the affront offered to their parent, Latona's twins sallied forth to avenge her; and while the arrows of Apollo pierced the breasts of Niobe's sons, their sisters were shot by Diana. The wretched parents hastened to their childrens' assistance, but an arrow from Apollo's bow pierced the heart of Amphion. Niobe, thus deprived at once of her children, who had been her greatest treasure, as well as the pride of her heart, and at the same time of her husband, went forth, disgusted with life, into the wilderness, there in lonely solitude to shed maternal tears. The gods beheld her sufferings, pitied her, and put an end to her grief. The once beautiful queen, dissolved in tears, found herself on

a sudden deprived of motion, and gradually stiffening into stone; she was changed into a rock, which, on mount Sipylus, in Lydia, continues, as if still conscious of sorrows, to shed tears, and is thus a perpetual monument of her grief.

CEPHALUS AND PROCRIS.

Cephalus, son of Dioneus, king of Phocis, had been but a short time married to Procris, the beautiful daughter of Erechtheus, king of Athens, when on mount Hymettus, while he was early in the morning pursuing the deer, he was seen and carried off by Aurora. The society of the goddess, however, was with Cephalus no equivalent for the loss of his beloved wife, and although Aurora tried every art to reconcile him to his present state, and to induce him to exchange for ever a terrestrial for a celestial abode, yet her endeavours were fruitless. Cephalus longed for his former residence, and for his Procris. At last, when the goddess saw that all her blandishments were unavailing, that his heart was full of his dear wife, and her name for ever on his lips, she dismissed him, but not without intimating to him, that the time should soon arrive, when he would repent of having preferred to a goddess a mortal woman, whom, in bitterness of soul, he would wish never to have seen.

These words effected the object intended by the incensed goddess; they filled the heart of Cephalus with jealousy and suspicion of his wife. With the view of trying her faithfulness, he returned in disguise to Procris, presenting himself as a lover. She received his overtures with disdain; but Cephalus, once experiencing the sting of jealousy in his heart, loaded her, after having discovered himself, with reproaches, and left her in a transport of rage. He was afterwards prevailed upon to become reconciled to her; and soon after Procris, on her part, became jealous and suspicious of her husband, because she had heard that he loved the

Nymph Aura, with whom he had secret interviews, when he pretended to her that he was going to hunt. To convince herself of his infidelity, Procris went to the spot which had been designated as the place of assignation of her husband and his mistress, and concealed herself behind some trees. Cephalus arrived, and throwing himself, panting and breathless from the fatigues of the chase, upon the grass, he exclaimed, *Aura, Aura,* meaning by the word nothing more than *gentle breeze, fresh air.* Procris, who supposed that she had heard the name of her rival, moved from behind the trees, and her husband, supposing the rustling that he heard to be occasioned by some wild beast, drew his bow, and the fatal arrow pierced the breast of Procris, who, when dying, was convinced by Cephalus of the groundlessness of her suspicions.

PHAETON.

In Egypt, where Jupiter had a son by Io, named Epaphus, lived also Phaëton, a son of Helios and Clymene. On a certain occasion, during a quarrel between the two youths, the former happened to assert, that Phaëton was no son of Helios, and that his mother falsely boasted of being the wife of a god. To refute this bitter reproach in the most splendid manner, Phaëton, instigated by his mother, went himself up to the palace of Helios, praying that his father would grant him a request. The god of the sun, who tenderly loved his child, inconsiderately swore by Styx to grant him what he should desire. But he had soon reason to repent of his promise, when Phaëton insisted upon being allowed to drive, for one day, the chariot of the sun. Not daring to violate the oath by Styx, and, finding entreaties and remonstrances unavailing to dissuade him from his perilous enterprise, Helios complied with his wish, and Phaëton courageously and joyfully mounted the chariot of the sun. No sooner, however, did the celestial

coursers discover that they were guided by a feebler hand than that of Helios, than they disregarded the efforts of their new charioteer, and, leaving their usual course, now approached too near the heavens, and now again came so close to the earth, that the mountains began to blaze, and the rivers and fountains dried up. The earth in her extremity besought Jupiter for help, and he, enraged already at the presumption of this new driver of the celestial horses, and at the danger in which the heavens themselves were brought by him, struck him in the head with one of his thunderbolts, which precipitated him into the river Eridanus. There his three sisters, the Heliades, or daughters of the sun, Lampetia, Phaëtusa, and Ægle, who tenderly loved their brother, lamented his loss so long, that at last the gods were touched with compassion at their grief, and changed them into palm trees, still shedding tears, that were hardened in the flood to amber. Cycnus also, the friend of Phaëton, lamented his death on the banks of Eridanus, till his form, dissolved in tears, was changed into that of a swan, which always remains on the floods that had swallowed his beloved friend.

THE DOMINIONS OF PLUTO.

Tartarus, or *Erebus*, properly speaking, was the abode of Night, where, at the remotest boundary of the earth, the sun was supposed to sink into the sea. There, too, was the mansion of Pluto, beneath which the Titans bemoaned their fate in a dark prison. The boundary of the earth, however, was thought to be the Atlantic Ocean, and thither, near the abode of Night, fiction placed also the blissful islands, where everlasting spring is reigning. There also, in the same dusky horizon of the west, the sky rested upon the shoulders of

Atlas; and the gardens of the Hesperides, the daughters of Night, yielded there the golden fruits.

In Greece, the entrance to the dominions of Pluto was imagined to be near the promontory of Tænarus; and farther westward in Thesprotia, two streams took their rise, which we find again in Orcus, the rivers Acheron and Cocytus. Here it was that Theseus and Pirithous were said to have descended to the dark abode of the shades. Still farther to the west, beyond the sea, on the coasts of Italy, imagination discovered another fit place for an entrance from the higher into the lower world. A dark, spacious cavern, led to a gloomy grove, contiguous to the lake Avernus; the poisonous exhalations arising from this lake were mortal to every bird that attempted to fly over it, and permitted no man to live round its borders, or in its vicinity.

PLUTO.

The ruler of the lower world was called by the Greeks Hades, or Aides, the Invisible, the Unknown; a name, indicating of itself the sable gloom, which no mortal eye had pierced. He was also named the Subterranean, or Stygian Jupiter, and plastic art represented him like the imperial Jove, only with this difference, that his gloomy features never relax into a smile. He is seated on a throne, bearing the royal sceptre in his hand; and if his head is not covered by that curious helmet of Vulcan's workmanship, which had the power to render every one who wore it invisible, his garment is drawn over his head, to intimate the god concealed, the god invisible and unknown. Sometimes also he is represented as bearing on his head, instead of a helmet, or crown, an ancient corn-measure, the emblem of the earth's fertility. In this manner he combines in his person the ideas of Jupiter and Pluto, of the god of the living and the god of the dead, and is called Serapis, or Jupiter Serapis. In this character, and under this name, he was

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worshipped chiefly at Alexandria, in Egypt. Pluto presided over the funeral obsequies, which he was supposed to have invented.

How youth and beauty may become a prey of sudden death, is intimated by the attractive tale of the ravishment of Proserpina by the king of the gloomy dominions. Struck with the charms of Ceres' lovely daughter, and aware that she would not willingly accompany him, the sable monarch carried her off by force, and made her his consort on the royal throne in the lower world. Her name, Persephone, under which she was known to the Greeks, is indicative of destruction and decay. In their subterranean palace, Pluto and Proserpina are thus seated beside each other on their gloomy throne, in melancholy unanimity, reigning over the dismal abode of the dead.

The gates to their dominions are watched by the triple-headed Cerberus; and before they can be reached four rivers must be crossed, the very names of which fill the soul with terror. The first is *Acheron*, the sighing river, a son of Earth. He was born in a cave, and, having a natural aversion to light, ran down into Orcus, where he was changed into the river which still retains his name. *Styx*, terrible above all, is a lake rather than a river, and has already been mentioned in the chapter on the ancient deities. The third river, *Cocytus*, flows out of Styx. The sound of its waters, the murmurs of which imitate the howling of the damned, is dismal beyond measure. *Pyriphlegethon*, the fourth river, rolls along slowly its waves of fire.

The office of carrying the dead over these dreadful rivers to the palace of Pluto, is committed to *Charon*, who is the ferryman of Orcus. This Charon, the son of Erebus and Night, is generally represented as a sordid and morose old man, whose bald forehead is lined with wrinkles, and whose long, neglected beard, is gray by age. In his demand of wages for conveying across the rivers, he is inexorable. As soon as a departed soul

presents herself at the spot, where he has his crazy boat in waiting, his first inquiry is, whether the traveller to that land from which there is no return, can pay her passage; and if it should happen that the Obolus has been forgotten, the poor soul may wander on the gloomy shores, waiting in vain for the pity of Charon. Such also of the dead as remained unburied, were forced to wander on those gloomy shores a hundred years, before they were conducted over the rivers, and could obtain rest.

The whole fiction of Hades, or Pluto, alludes to the grave, whose narrow bounds imagination enlarged into a world of shades. The kingdom of Pluto is therefore generally called a desolate and void empire, and his palace a narrow mansion. There is the same allusion to the grave and to decay in the old and leaky boat of Charon, which only creeps, as it were, across the rivers, taking up much slime through its crevices. The dead themselves are represented like a world of dreams; the empty shades appear and disappear in a moment; yet they are sensible of what they had formerly been, and of what they had possessed, and still strive to accomplish those pursuits, in which they had been engaged when living in the higher regions, like a man who works and fatigues himself during a dream, without attaining his object.

When Ulysses, by the command of Circe, went down into the lower world, the souls of all the departed whom he had known during their life time, assembled around the ditch, into which he shed the dark blood of his victims. His mother presented herself to him, but when he was going to embrace her, the empty shade receded, telling him, that, after the body was destroyed, the soul escaped every touch like a dream. The shade of Agamemnon stretched forth his arms towards his friend and counsellor, but there was no more strength in his members. Ulysses addressed the shade of Achilles, congratulating him on account of his having been renown-

ed while among the living, and of his being now esteemed among the dead; to which Achilles replied, that, were it possible, he would return to life, and serve as a poor day labourer for scanty wages, rather than reign in his present abode over all the departed. The shade of Hercules, too, appeared to Ulysses, although he himself had his seat among the celestials.

Æneas, who, for the sake of visiting his father Anchises, descended to the abodes of the departed, heard, as soon as he had placed his foot on the other bank of the river, the weeping and wailing of those children, who, not long after their birth, had left life again, without having been permitted to enjoy it. Near their abode were the mansions of those who had either been innocently sentenced to death, or had themselves put a period to their lives, the light of heaven having become odious to them, and who would now gladly bear the greatest poverty, and undergo the hardest labour, could they be permitted by unchangeable destiny to return to those regions which they had so inconsiderately deserted. Æneas then arrived in the fields of sorrow, where those were roaming, whose lives had been shortened by disappointed love. On the left side of their abode, he beheld Tartarus, where the scorners of the gods, and the perpetrators of injustice and crimes, were compelled to atone for their deeds; and on the right he entered Elysium, the mansion of the blessed, particularly of the souls of those who had seen the better times on earth, the golden age, before man was stained by guilt. Here the souls of the just, freed from the passions and prejudices of mortality, ranged from grove to grove, and enjoyed the pleasures of friendship and contemplation, until, at the command of Jupiter, they drank the waters of *Lethe*, and the oblivious draught instantly caused them to lose all remembrance of the past. They then returned again, in human forms, to the earth, where, forgetful of the joys of Elysium, they patiently endured the cares and sorrows of humanity, until the close of a

well-spent life restored them again to the mansions of the just. In the blessed Elysian fields, Æneas met with his father, who disclosed to him the mysteries of birth and death, of rise and decay, and opened before his mental eye a view of the times to come.

Among the superior beings who, besides Pluto and Proserpina, are inhabitants of Orcus, the following must be mentioned:

Parcæ, or Fates.—Of these we have already had occasion to speak. They are always represented as old women, attired in white robes. These formidable sisters superintend a multitude of inferior fates, to each of whom Destiny has assigned a skein of thread, on which depends the existence of a mortal.

Plutus.—The origin of this god is not certainly known; some make him the son of Rhea and Time, while others announce him as the offspring of Ceres and Jason, an agriculturist. He presides over wealth and riches, and being himself blind, he has the goddess Fortune for a guide. He is represented not only as blind, but also as lame; he reposes upon a throne of gold, over which is placed a canopy enriched with jewels.

> "Let none admire
> That riches grow in hell; that soil may best
> Deserve the precious bane."*

Furies, or Eumenides.—The origin of these formidable beings has been already mentioned. Their names are significant; *Tisiphone* is the avenger of murder; *Megæra* is the wrathful; *Alecto* is the restless. The office of the severe and inexorable sisters is to punish injustice and crime, and to torment the wicked. Nothing can be conceived more frightful than their appearance. Snakes, instead of hair, wind round their heads, and, when incensed, their black garments are spotted with blood. With the one hand they grasp a dagger, and

* Paradise Lost, Book I. 690, ss.

hold a torch in the other. Thus they pursue the guilty, never ceasing to torment him, until he has atoned for his crimes; thus they pursued Orestes, the murderer of his own mother. So great was the awe in which men stood of the Furies, that they scarcely ventured to mention their names. Few, even among the superior deities, received so much homage as the three avenging sisters. They had a temple at Athens, near the Areopagus, the priests of which formed a tribunal, before which no one dared to appeal until he had sworn upon the altar of the Eumenides to tell nothing but the truth; and whoever was conscious of any unlawful action perpetrated in secret, endeavoured to propitiate them by prayers and offerings.

Death.—The Greeks acknowledged no god, or goddess of Death; they knew only the genius of Death, who reversed and quenched his torch whenever he brought a man to his last rest. He has been mentioned already. But the Romans sometimes speak of Mors, the daughter of Night and Erebus, to whom, however, no temple was ever dedicated, nor any sacrifice offered, because Death is inaccessible to entreaties, and not to be moved by supplications and offerings.

Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Æacus, the judges of the souls of the dead, have been mentioned before, and it is only necessary to add here, that Rhadamanthus was supposed to be the judge of the Asiatics; Æacus of the Europeans, and that Minos, who, as president of the awful tribunal, held a golden sceptre, acted as umpire in uncertain and difficult cases.

PUNISHMENTS OF THE CRIMINALS IN TARTARUS.

The criminals who are forced to atone for their crimes in Tartarus, are, properly speaking, not condemned to what may be termed sufferings, but rather to an endless labour, that never attains the object for which it is undertaken. Their punishment appears to consist in this;

that the restless life which they led in the higher world, now pursues them in the lower regions; which is, at the same time, an emblem of their boundless ambition, which made them odious to the gods, because they would not bear to be too nearly approached by a mortal.

TANTALUS.

He was the son of Jupiter and the nymph Plota, and fiction represents this wealthy and sage monarch, who reigned in the country adjoining mount Sipylus, in Lydia, as the favourite of the immortals. He sat at the same table with Jupiter himself, who was pleased with his conversation, and the deep sense which was hidden in his words; but alas!

> "For a slave too great, and for companion
> Of the mighty Thunderer but a man,"*

he once forgot himself so far as to offend Jupiter with some intemperate language, and he immediately plunged him from the height of happiness into immeasurable depths of misery. The punishment inflicted upon Tantalus was this; that he should be tormented by everlasting thirst and hunger, and, at the same time, should be obliged to see the clear flood rising to his lips, but flying back as soon as he tried to swallow it, and to behold the branch, loaded with inviting fruits, which hung close round his head, but receded whenever he stretched forth his hand to touch them.

This punishment was, as it were, a continuance of the life which he led on earth; an emblem of that unsatisfied desire to penetrate the secrets of the gods, a desire which even induced him to kill his son Pelops, and to serve up his flesh at a banquet, to which he had invited the gods, in order to ascertain their divinity. If any thing can indicate the danger of inordinate curiosity in mortals, it is this shocking tale. It is the depreda-

* Goethe's Iphigenia.

tion which humanity commits on itself, in order to investigate the primeval cause of its existence. Ceres was the only deity who partook of the repast that was placed before the assembled gods by Tantalus. They afterwards recalled Pelops to life, and procured him an ivory shoulder in the place of that which Ceres had eaten. Fiction justifies the sentence passed upon Tantalus by this transaction. All his other crimes were encroachments upon the privileges of the celestials. He stole some ambrosia from their table, that mortal lips might taste it; and, assisted by Pandarus, he carried off Jupiter's dog, that watched the sanctuary of the god in Crete.

IXION.

Ixion, who reigned in Thessaly, was subjected to a fate very similar to that of Tantalus; he also was admitted to the table of the gods, where the charms of the queen of the heavens made him forget his mortality. Vain and presumptuous, he imagined himself to have attained the summit of his wishes, when, instead of embracing Juno, he clasped in his arms a cloud, which Jupiter had thrown in his way, to try his impudence. The presumptuous attempts of this mortal to enjoy what is the property of heaven, and unattainable by man, were not only defeated, but punished. He was expelled from Olympus; and when he had the temerity to boast on earth of what he had attempted in heaven, Jupiter hurled him into Tartarus, where he was fastened to a wheel, which turns continually. Thus is he obliged to atone for his criminal wishes, which induced him to transgress the boundaries allotted to humanity. His restlessness never ceases; it is like the wheel of human endeavours, which merely turns round itself, to no purpose.

PHLEGYAS.

Phlegyas, a king of Thessaly, and father of Ixion, was one of the most valiant and warlike princes of Greece. He built a city, which he named after himself, and peopled with the most eminent and courageous warriors. They were called the sons of Mars, and terror preceded them wherever they were. Phlegyas, incensed beyond measure against Apollo, who had carried off his daughter Coronis, sallied forth with his warriors to Delphi, conquered the city, and burned Apollo's temple. This horrid crime met with an adequate punishment. Phlegyas was banished to Tartarus, where a ponderous rock always hangs immediately over his head, threatening every moment to crush him. The constant danger which the impetuous warrior sought in the battle, accompanied him to Tartarus, and thus becomes a terrible emblem of the lot of mortals, over whose heads Destiny, wrapped in darkness, was thought perpetually to hover, menacing every moment ruin and destruction, and tormenting the soul with constant doubt and apprehension.

THE DANAIDES.

It has been already stated, that the fifty daughters of Danaus, king of Argos, put to death, with the single exception of Hypermnestra, all their husbands on their wedding night. The punishment which they had to suffer for this crime, was also a labour without end. They were condemned incessantly to pour water into a vessel full of holes; so that they see every moment that their labour is vain, as soon as it is performed.

SISYPHUS.

Sisyphus, king of Corinth, was one of the most active

and wise princes of his times. Nevertheless, he was condemned not only to take up his residence in Tartarus, but, like the Danäides, to perform there a task which is never completed. He is obliged constantly to roll a huge rock up to the summit of a mountain; but as soon as he has nearly reached the top, and rejoices in the hope of being permitted to rest from his hard labour, the rock, in spite of all his endeavours, rolls down again.

Sisyphus had lived to a great age, and this is the reason why fiction asserts that he had deceived the subterranean deities, who had once permitted him, upon his promise of a speedy return, to leave Orcus, and that he had broken his word with them. As he endeavoured in this way to prolong his days beyond the destined term, the ever-rolling rock, on which he vainly exhausts his strength in Tartarus, is, as it were, an emblem of the troublesome labour of life, which he was unwilling to abandon.

CUPID AND PSYCHE.

One of the most charming fictions which antiquity has transmitted to us, is that of Cupid and Psyche. It involves the most sublime and the most tender ideas of life, death, and immortality, as far as such ideas may be expected among the religious heathen of ancient times. The name of Psyche signifies both a butterfly and the human soul. When represented, therefore, with the wings of a butterfly attached to her shoulders, Psyche is, as it were, the emblem of a tender, spiritual being, who, freed from the coarser covering of her chrysalis, and too sublimated for this lower world, rises to a higher existence, where, united in sacred and mutual marriage with Love, she participates in that bliss which the immortals themselves enjoy. This fiction forms the veil which, in a most agreeable manner, conceals the terrors of the lower world.

Psyche, the most lovely of mortals, was the daughter

of a powerful monarch, and the youngest of three sisters. So transcendent was her beauty, that no mortal man dared sue for her hand, and her father's subjects, neglecting the worship of Venus, raised altars to Psyche. Her parents exulted in the general homage paid to their daughter; and her sisters, somewhat jealous of her superior beauty, pleased themselves with the thought, that, while they were married, she would never have a husband. Both parents and sisters, however, soon found themselves disappointed in the anticipations which they had indulged. The former were obliged, by the command of an oracle, to conduct their darling daughter, arrayed in festive attire, as if to her burial, to the summit of a steep mountain, and there to abandon her to her fate. No sooner did Psyche find herself alone, than she was tenderly raised by a Zephyr, that carried her to the abode which had been prepared for her by Love. She saw herself transported to a region unknown to her, but the most charming which her eye had ever beheld. A magnificent palace, surrounded by beautiful groves and beds of flowers, was at her disposal; she was mistress of many invisible attendants, and her commands were no sooner issued than they were instantly executed. Him, who had bestowed on her this delightful abode, and whom she was to consider as her husband, her eyes did not behold. He visited her only at night, telling her, with a sweetly sounding voice, that he was the husband allotted to her by the immortals, but entreating and warning her, at the same time, never to inquire who he was, otherwise she would lose his love for ever, and become miserable.

But in the midst of a heavenly happiness, Psyche longed to see once more her parents, or at least her sisters, that she might dissipate the grief of her family on account of her fate. Her husband, seeing that all the entreaties and remonstrances with which he endeavoured to banish this wish from the heart of his spouse, were vain, consented at last to her sisters' visiting

her. Zephyr was accordingly ordered to convey them to Psyche's abode. No sooner had they arrived, and beheld the happiness which had been allotted to their sister, than envy swallowed every better feeling of their hearts; and after having heard the particular circumstances under which Psyche enjoyed her matrimonial happiness, they infused into her the suspicion, that her husband must be a hideous monster, because he dreaded to be seen. Their malevolence even went so far as to persuade their sister by every possible art to transgress the positive command of her husband, and, by a pointed iron, to rid herself of the monster, when buried in sleep. The sisters were carried away again by Zephyr, and poor Psyche, whose mind was agitated by contending feelings, resolved at last to follow the counsel which her malevolent sisters had given her. When night had expanded its wings over her blessed abode, and her husband was buried in repose, she took up the lamp, and a dagger which she had concealed, and stepped with fainting knees and trembling hand to the couch of the unknown. But instead of the monster whom she had expected to see, she beheld the most beautiful of the immortals, Cupid, the god of Love! She attempted gently to draw away the lamp, but her hand trembled, and a drop of hot oil fell upon the god's shoulder. Cupid started up from his sleep, and, beholding his wife with lamp and dagger, cast a look on the wretched Psyche, in which rage, and scorn, and pity, were intermingled: he mounted on his wings, never more to return.

When Psyche felt that she had lost the love and esteem of her adored husband, despair took possession of her mind, and she attempted to put a period to her existence. She threw herself into a neighbouring stream, but the floods gently carried her to the opposite bank, where Pan endeavoured to console her, by predicting to her that she was destined, at a future period, to be once more happy.

Psyche's sisters, who had anticipated the conse-

quences of their fatal counsel, and who now wished to succeed their unfortunate sister, placed themselves, one after the other, on the summit of the mountain, from which Psyche had been carried away by unknown powers, hoping that Zephyr would convey them to the wished for residence; but being hurled into the abyss by sudden blasts of wind, they atoned with their deaths for the envy and treachery which they had displayed against their innocent sister.

Poor Psyche overran the whole earth in search of her lost husband; but finding all her endeavours vain, she at last took the resolution of applying to Venus, and of imploring mercy from her. Venus, who was incensed at the fair suppliant, on account of her intercourse with Cupid, as well as because of her celestial beauty, received her with reproaches, and imposed on her the severest trials, enjoining tasks, the performance of which appeared impossible. Psyche, however, assisted by beneficent beings, whom Cupid, who still loved her, sent to her aid, surmounted all difficulties; yet was she obliged for a long time to suffer the consequences of her imprudence, until she was again thought worthy of her forfeited happiness. At last she was ordered by Venus to descend into Orcus itself, and to fetch from Proserpina a box containing the highest charms of beauty. Psyche obeyed the command of the cruel goddess. She set out on the dreadful journey, despairing herself of success, but the voice of him who was invisibly her protector and guide, taught her every precaution that was necessary to be taken, and warned her of every danger to be avoided.

Being provided with some cake to tame the fury of Cerberus, and a sum of money to gain the good will of Charon, she ventured down to the gloomy regions, and arrived safely at the palace of Proserpina. The desired box was delivered to her, but with a strict injunction not to open it. Psyche, who had surmounted so many difficulties, and sustained with heroic fortitude so many

trials, suffered herself to be overpowered by this last. Scarcely had she left the dominions of Pluto, when curiosity and vanity induced her to open the box. That moment was she involved in a black and noxious vapour, which threw her into a sleep, from which she would never have again risen, had not Cupid, her invisible protector, hastened to her assistance. He restored her to life, collected the vapour again into the box, and conducted his beloved Psyche safely to the throne of Jove, there proclaiming her as his lawful wife, and supplicating for her admission among the number of the immortals. Jupiter complied with his request; Venus became reconciled to her beauteous daughter-in-law; and the whole choir of the celestials celebrated the second, the heavenly marriage of Cupid and Psyche.

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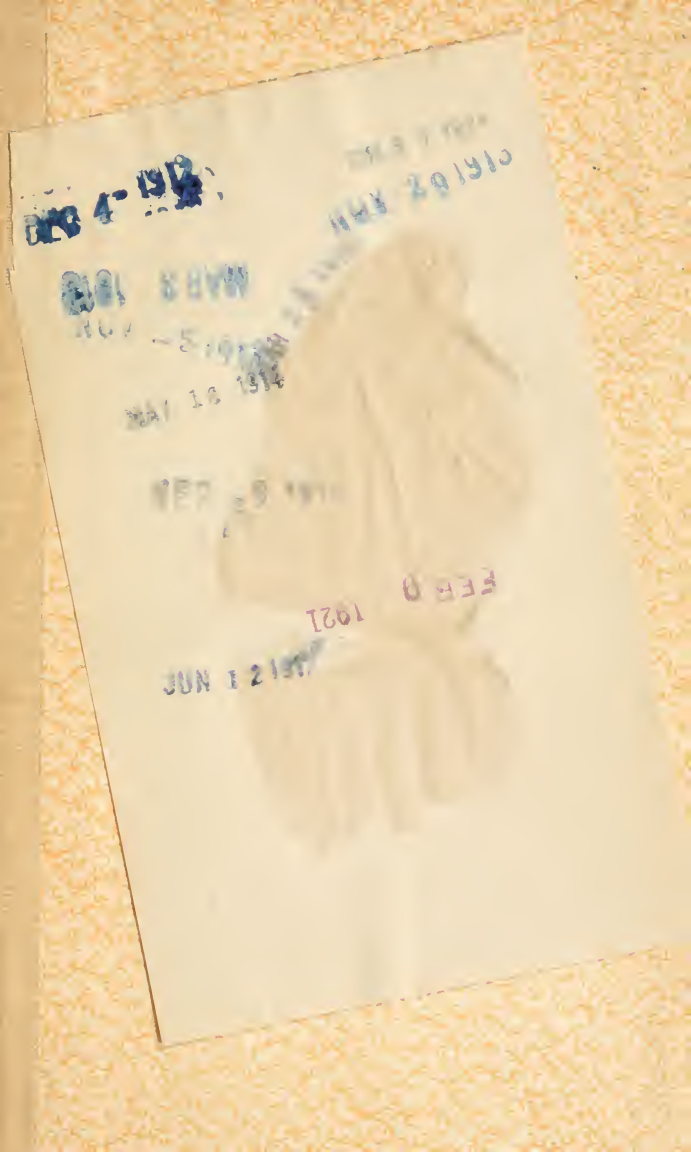
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